

Vondeling



Location: Paarl ■ Map: Paarl & Wellington ■ WO: Voor Paardeberg ■ Est 2001 ■ 1stB 2005 ■ Tasting & sales Mon-Fri 10-5 ■ Wedding/function/conference venue & chapel ■ Owner(s) Richard Gower, Julian Johnsen & Anthony Ward ■ Cellarmaster(s) Matthew Copeland (Jul 2007) ■ Winemaker(s) Emile van der Merwe (Dec 2011), with William Mofokeng (Jan 2005) ■ Viticulturist(s) Magnus Joubert (Jul 2012) ■ 115ha (cabs s/f, carignan, grenache r/w, malbec, merlot, mourv, p verdot, shiraz, chard, chenin, muscat de F, sauv, viog) ■ 950t/90,000cs own label 40% red 50% white 10% rosé ■ Other export brand: Signal Cannon ■ PO Box 57 Wellington 7654 ■ admin@vondelingwines.co.za ■ www.vondelingwines.co.za ■ S 33° 35' 22.50" E 018° 52' 45.00" ■ T +27 (0)21-869-8595 ■ F +27 (0)21-869-8219

Continual development at this British-owned progressive property. It's now open to the public, with a dedicated tasting centre, and a small chapel for weddings has been completed. Behind the scenes is serious commitment to conservation and sustainability, a full-time botanist employed to geo-tag, catalogue and DNA fingerprint endangered fynbos. Vondeling is also home to the Voor Paardeberg Sustainability Initiative and Fire Protection Association. On the wine side, due early this year is a single-ferment méthode ancestrale sparkling.

★★★★ **Erica Shiraz** 🍷 🍷 With soupçons 4 other Rhône varieties, **10** has all the right touches, scrub, white pepper, hint of chocolate, folded into plush dark fruit. Supple tannins give a platform for ageing.

★★★★ **Chardonnay** ✓ 🍷 🍷 Bunch pressing, wild yeast ferment, 10 months in barrel, **11** is seriously made. Citrus peel, dried peach & almonds, lees-ageing creamy & softly curvaceous, this is delicious.

★★★★ **Sauvignon Blanc** ✓ 🍷 🍷 Nice combo lemon leaf & flintiness in elegant **13**, all pointing to vibrant freshness, excellent seafood compatibility. Back on track after less intense **12** (★★★★).

★★★★ **Babiana** ✓ 🍷 🍷 Half chenin with 3 others, wild ferment & oak, **11** (★★★★★) has lovely melon & dried pear, oatmeal & silky curvaceous lines, improves on also-tasted **10**, which shows how well these wines age. Deeper flavours here, melon preserve & crushed nuts, but enough intrinsic freshness for a continued future.

Petit Rouge 😊 🍷 🍷 ★★★ Merlot/cab mix for earlier drinking, as **12**'s name implies. Plump mulberries, juicy, a dash of cedar & nice grip.

Cabernet Sauvignon Next awaited, as for **Petit Blanc** & **Sweet Carolyn**. **Baldrick Shiraz** 🍷 🍷 ★★★★★ Smoky & dark **12**'s floral, dried herb notes are from mourvèdre & viognier but the fleshy smoothness is shiraz's own. Discontinued: **Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot**. — CR