

Vondeling



High on the agenda for this British-owned property is conservation and sustainability. There can be only a handful of Cape farms that employ a full-time botanist, as Vondeling does, to geo-tag, catalogue and fingerprint endangered fynbos on its biodiverse Voor Paardeberg land. However, wine definitely gets its due. The cellar team is encouraged to be creative and one of the results is a rare, just-released méthode ancestrale sparkling wine. Though labour intensive, fraught with difficulty and reliant on very precise timing, the venture is deemed 'exciting, with enormous potential!'

★★★★ **Cabernet Sauvignon** Molten dark plums, loads of spice, **12** is hard to ignore, its 18 months in French/Hungarian barrels apparent in the flavours but tannins are supple, drinkability assured.

★★★★ **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 pressed, wild yeast barrel ferment/ageing year. **13** shows citrus peel & white peach, nutty savoury overlay, lemon-fresh elegance. Also-tasted **12**'s citrus freshness & svelte lines as attractive.

★★★★ **Sauvignon Blanc** Leafy, fynbos top note to **14**'s mineral character, the crisp lemony acidity an ideal match with seafood, oysters. Lovely Old World austerity, another take on sauvignon.

★★★★☆ **Babiana** Chenin-led with 3 others, natural ferment/ageing in barrel. Melon & quince in **12**, savoury shortbread oak spicing, the freshness given a sweet/sour edge from a touch of sugar. Distinctive, delicious, ageworthy.

★★★★ **Rurale Méthode Ancestral** (NEW) Ancient method where fermenting juice is bottled & conversion to bubbly takes place in it, in one process. **13** from chardonnay, great lemony intensity, long zesty finish, can age.

★★★★☆ **Sweet Carolyn** An occasional release, ambrosial vine-dried muscat de Frontignan. Like **06**, **11** is stellar, hedonistic, the grapey perfume not preparing you for the flavour intensity: molten apricots & pineapple, riveting freshness underpinning the richness. Improves on last **09** (★★★★).

Rosé (NEW) ★★★ Red berries with herbaceous overtones, **14** from merlot is light & dry, the styling a great match for creative salads, tapas. Also tasted: **Baldrick Shiraz 13** ★★★★★ **Petit Rouge 13** ★★★★★ **Petit Blanc 14** ★★★★★ — CR

Location: Paarl ■ Map: Paarl & Wellington ■ WO: Voor Paardeberg ■ Est 2001 ■ 1stB 2005 ■ Tasting & sales Mon-Fri 10-5 Sat/pub hols by appt ■ Wedding/function/conference venue ■ St Clement's Chapel ■ Owner(s) Richard Gower, Julian Johnsen & Anthony Ward ■ Winemaker(s) Matthew Copeland (Jul 2007), with Emile van der Merwe (Dec 2011) ■ 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) ■ 1,200t/90,000cs own label 40% red 40% white 20% rosé ■ Other export brand: Signal Cannon ■ BWI champion ■ PO Box 57 Wellington 7654 ■ admin@vondelingwines.co.za ■ www.vondelingwines.co.za ■ S 33° 35' 22.50" E 018° 52' 45.00" ■ F +27 (0)21-869-8219 ■ T +27 (0)21-869-8595