

THE AHRENS FAMILY WINES - tasting notes for food pairings.

First of all I am much better at enjoying wine than writing about it. My tasting notes are not descriptive of specific flavours, but rather an explanation of each wines texture & structure, which in my humble opinion has more value in terms of making good food pairing decisions.

Vintage variations

2016 – This was the warmest vintage of my wine making career. The harvest was hence very small. The grape berries where small and concentrated and wines are generally more intense in riper.

2017 – This was a much more moderate vintage. Despite having much less heat than 2016, we were however in the midst of a drought. Grape bunches and berries were generally small due to the dry conditions and hence the wines are concentrated but slightly more perfumer and elegant than big bold 2016.

The WHITEBLACK

This Voor-Paardeberg white is lean and clean with loads of minerality with yellow fruit nuances. Being a warm climate the wine has lower yet well balanced acidity and ages incredibly well. Medium to light body and pallet weight relative to whites in general.

Soil: Decomposed Granite

Cépage: Rousanne, Marsanne & Grenache Blanc

Typical analysis:

Alc: 13 - 13.5% RS: 2 - 2.5g/l TA: 5.5 - 6g/l

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Bottelary OVC

This is the coolest of my OVC(Old-Vine-Chenin) vineyard sites. The paradox is that it's still the warmest part of Stellenbosch. The balance of acidity in wine is achieved by harvesting in stages of ripeness. Typically 33% early for freshness and acid, 33% at optimal ripeness and 33% late harvested for richness and beautiful ripe Chenin flavor. The wine is medium bodied with minerality on the pallet and the fruit profile is predominantly yellow.

Soil: Younger Decomposed Granite

Cépage: Chenin Blanc planted in 1981

Typical analysis:

Alc: 13.5% RS: 2.5 - 3g/l TA: 5.7 - 6.2g/l

Swarland BLACK

Black is a classic Swartland red. Multi-layered and complex. Medium bodied bright red to dark red fruit profile. This wine has the most components built into it of all of my wines.

Soil: A blend of mostly decomposed Granite and Shale soils.

Cépage: Mostly Syrah with Carignan assisted with a small component of Grenache & Cinsault

Typical analysis:

Alc: 14- 14.5% RS: 2 - 2.5g/l TA: 5.5 - 5.8g/l

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Paarl ROOIWIJN

This interpretation of the northern Paarl terroir has a medium to full pallet weight, relative to my wine style, which in general is more towards a medium bodied style. The tannins are polished with the addition of Cinsault. The bright red to darker red fruit profile is complemented with a well balanced acidity.

Soil: Schale

Cépage: Mostly Syrah with Cinsault

Typical analysis:

Alc: 14.5% RS: 2 - 2.5g/l TA: 5.5 - 5.9g/l

Bottelary SEVENTY

Bottelary Seventy gets its name from the 70's era of wine styles in this northern part of the Stellenbosch region. The wine has the biggest pallet weight of all my wines and has predominant dark fruit with subtle underlying red fruit. The weight of the wine is well balanced with the acidity. The tannins are extremely well integrated, as all of my reds spend at least 4 weeks on the skin during and after fermentation, in order for all the "excess" tannin to "bind back" to the skins.

Soil: Younger Decomposed Granite

Cépage: Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon with Cinsault.

Typical analysis:

Alc: 14.5% RS: 2 - 2.5g/l TA: 5.6 - 6g/l

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