

# SERIOUSLY COOL CINSAULT 2019

## IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

Cinsault vines have been grown for centuries in Southern France. In the Rhône and Languedoc regions it is primarily used as a supporting agent in red blends, especially Châteauneuf-du-Pape, to add spice and aromatics, whilst mellowing out harsh tannins.

But, perhaps its most important role in wine history took place in South Africa, where in 1925 it was crossed with Pinot Noir by Stellenbosch University Professor A.I. Perold in an attempt to create a unique South African varietal. Today this proudly South African varietal is known as Pinotage.

Historically in South Africa, Cinsault was used to soften the tannins on red blends and also to increase yields in easy-drinking table wines. For this reason, we are blessed with fantastic older Cinsault vines in the Cape.

Seriously Cool Cinsault is produced from over 30-35 year old bush vines on the outskirts of Stellenbosch. Older vines are known to have reached optimal balance in growth and production through time. This allows for low yields and ripe fruit with intense flavours. The soils are of sandstone (with medium-sized stones) origin, as well as sandy, helping with drainage and moisture retention. Production was approximately 4t/ha.

## A GENTLE HAND

Picking dates are determined by tasting in the vineyard - working our way back from knowing what type of wine we would like to make, and then looking for those required flavours in the grapes.

We follow a traditional, minimalistic approach which means that we interfere as little as possible with the winemaking process. This allows the flavours prevalent in that specific vineyard to be expressed in the wine. To achieve this goal the whole bunches are carefully sorted and, via gravity, placed in our wooden fermenters.

Alcoholic fermentation starts spontaneously inside the berry from the naturally occurring yeast. After approximately 3 days of this intracellular fermentation, the grapes are punched down by foot, twice daily, to ensure that the berries are broken slowly and softly, and not over extracted.

The wine is kept on the skins for a minimum of 30 days, dependant on taste. Powered through gravity alone, the wine runs down to a tank below. The remaining berries fall into the basket press, where they are gently pressed. The soft pressing and the free-run are then placed together in second and third fill 600L French oak barrels to finish malolactic fermentation, and the wine is then aged for about 10 months.

This wine expresses the grapes in their purest form and no fining agents were added. Only sulphur was added and no other additions, such as tartaric acid or enzymes were allowed.



## AND A FEW PRAYERS TO MOTHER NATURE: THE 2017/2018 GROWING SEASON

The current harvest is determined by the conditions of the previous years. With this taken into account, we could see that all of our hard work in 2018 certainly paid off in the 2019 harvest. The leaves were still green for more than a month after picking the grapes. We welcomed a bit of rain just after the 2018 harvest, which also helped the vines to build some much-needed reserves.

The 2018 winter was cold and the vines could achieve proper dormancy. During this time, we worked hard to increase the nutrients required in the vineyard for the summer growing period. At Waterkloof, we are always tweaking the processes. One example, of many, is the deep bed system, where we put plant cuttings and manure into an area that used to be aerated by chickens scratching around. This time, the chickens were substituted with pigs and their behaviour of channel digging naturally turned the compost. This mixture was especially beneficial during the drought, as it is a rich source of carbon which improves the water retention of the soil.

We experienced an even budburst during a cool spring, but had a lot of wind during flowering which led to uneven berry set on some of the blocks. To help the vine ripen properly, we only kept the more developed bunches on the vine.

The summer growing season was fairly cool, except for a few warmer days in October. We were also very happy to welcome some rain in January which, accompanied by the wind, led to the soil receiving good moisture and without having humidity build-up on the grapes that could cause rot.

The 2019 harvest commenced in the last week of January and went into full swing from the first week of February. We picked our final grapes at the end of March. In the younger blocks, the yield was down by about 10%, but the older blocks produced more or less the same.

The whites showed a lot of concentration and vibrant acidity. With the reds, we had lovely small berries with thick skins. During processing, we once again worked gently to avoid over-extracting and let Mother Nature take her course with our natural ferments.

## TASTING NOTES FROM THE GLASS OF NADIA LANGENEGGER

Our Cinsault is known as COOL because we recommend that you enjoy it at a lower temperature (around 14°C) and because it stems from the cooler slopes. We also describe it as SERIOUS because it ensures a well-structured, memorable length in the mouth.

The old bush vines gave rise to a soft, balanced tannin structure and elevated length. This wine is playful in its aromas with pronounced floral and perfume notes, backed by a savoury undertone. I enjoy going back to my glass to appreciate the complexity. In the mouth, the prominent fruit aromatics are complemented by soft tannins that develop effortlessly.

This wine can be enjoyed on its own, but also pairs well with a variety of dishes, especially duck or a pork-belly inspired dish.

## THE NUMBERS (10 400 bottles produced)

Alc: 12.5 % RS: 1.8 TA: 4.2 g/l pH: 3.8