

THE CHOCOLATE BLOCK



2023 VINTAGE 4043 BARRELS

Alcohol: 14.35%vol

RS: 2.63 g/l

TA: 5.00 g/l

pH: 3.80

Blend: Syrah 74%; Grenache 11%; Cabernet Sauvignon 8%; Cinsault 6%; Viognier 1%



VEGAN

Winemaker's Comments & Vinification

The 2023 Swartland growing season witnessed below average rainfall, ultimately resulting in a challenging vintage. Late December rains brought mild relief, the vines however, remained immensely stressed due to minimal soil moisture. These tricky conditions inevitably saw the vineyards raising small canopies and carrying low yields. Interestingly (and a great blessing), this vintage did not experience the usual December and January heatwaves, leading to lower alcohol conversions and naturally low residual sugar. The resultant wine is balanced and tremendously elegant with well-integrated tannins.

"We made an important decision in 2015 to shift from general appellation Western Cape to Wine of Origin Swartland. The significance is that we can directly manage the majority of the fruit being vinified for The Chocolate Block and farm the vineyards using our sustainable approach to viticulture. After more than a decade of working with these Swartland vineyards, our Porseleinberg and Goldmine farms represent about 60% of the fruit in the final blend. Notably, we can see that the wines have changed stylistically. With our acquisition of Partnership Vineyard in '22, we have further expanded our footprint in the Swartland and our goal of eventually filling our fermenters with our own, sustainably farmed vineyards. It's about the purity of fruit, elegance and structure."
- Marc Kent

Grapes are whole-berry fermented in a combination of concrete and stainless steel fermenters with no additions being made. After spontaneous fermentation, we transferred the juice to seasoned 225L French barrique. The élevage ranged between 12-14 months, depending on variety.

Tasting Notes

The nose is rich and intense with its abundance of black- and blueberry fruit, ripe brambles, and notes of black olives, perfume and dust. Whiffs of white pepper and coriander seed add to the complexity. The bright dark berries of the nose follow through onto a juicy, abundant palate with classic red liquorice and fresh cherry flavours. The wine is medium to full-bodied, with a broad, weighty midpalate, yet the mouthfeel is smooth, gentle. Lively acidity and svelte, velvety tannins are balanced and add to the elegance, focus and energy of the wine. Hints of cherry tobacco and exotic spice linger on a pure, dry finish.