



Philosophie 2016

(Merlot 60%, Cabernet Sauvignon 15%, Cabernet Franc 13%, Malbec 12%)

LIMITED RELEASE

Philosophie is a brave endeavour in which we attempt to marry the mind, the heart and the soil as we celebrate the diversity of Vondeling.

THE STORY BEHIND THE LABEL

Each year a celebrated artist is recruited to illustrate a rare Paardeberg flower in the medium of their choice. This unique rendition is placed on a numbered selection of Vondeling's finest bottles to create a series of collectable and rare wine. This year, we've chosen the rare and endangered, *Pauridia Capensis*, commonly known as The Peacock Flower or Star of Winter, to be our flagbearer. This brave and vibrant bloom, beautifully illustrated by Edwina Ellis, is an apt choice for such a bold vintage.

VINEYARDS

In a handful of specific vineyards, we explore the absolute limits of quality with no consideration to cost. 2016 is a unique vintage with Merlot as the dominant grape. Located above our chosen Cabernet Sauvignon, this tiny parcel of vines, only 7 short rows, produced something extraordinary. The fruit purity and intensity could not be overlooked and needed to be celebrated. No to break with tradition the Merlot is complimented handsomely by fellow Bordeaux companions, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Malbec.

Each vineyard is carefully assessed at the end of the growing season and attentively pruned during the winter months. At bud burst, any shoots which develop poorly are immediately removed. This ensures that the remaining shoots have plenty of energy to grow sturdy, fertile flowers and facilitate uniform berry set.

As the grapes develop only one bunch per cane is selected and the rest are dropped to the ground. This lowers the load on the vine, thereby removing any stress in the plant and allowing perfect flavour and tannin development. It also diminishes any need for irrigation and helps preserve the grape's natural acidity.

VINIFICATION

Once deemed to have reached optimal ripeness the grapes are hand-picked and refrigerated for 24hrs. The bunches are carefully destemmed, but not crushed and the berries individually sorted to remove any green material. The berries are not pumped, but ferried, via conveyor to open-top fermenters.





Philosophie 2015

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Cold soaking is done at 6 degrees Celsius for a period of 5 days. Cold soaking is a process that allows only partial degradation of the grape cell wall, to gently extract the fruit flavours and aromatics situated below the surface of the skin. Subtle tannin extraction protects these delicate flavours and promotes colour stability.

As the berries slowly come to room temperature, ambient yeasts commence with spontaneous fermentation. This natural fermentation by multiple yeast strains, is preferable, as it will ensure that the wine has complexity and character.

A cool fermentation temperature slows the rate of fermentation and affords the winemaker adequate time to assess and manipulate the character of the wine, thus unlocking its full potential.

Full extraction is ensured by regular punch downs after three weeks of maceration the skins are gently pressed in a traditional basket press. From the press the wine moves directly to 300L French Oak barrels for malolactic fermentation. This slow bacterial degradation of the wine's harsher acidity has the welcome side effect of meshing the oak and natural fruit flavours into a seamless package. Two-thirds of the barrels are new.

The wine remains on its yeast and malolactic lees for 14 months before the best 10 barrels are selected, blended and returned for an additional 8 months of maturation. Of these 10 barrels only 5 are selected for the final blend. The wine is bottled after 3 months in tank and bottle matured for at least two years before release.

TASTING NOTES & CELLARING & FOOD PAIRING

A deep but vibrant, scarlet red colour. A wonderfully expressive and enthusiastic nose. Bursting with bright red cherry and high floral notes. Beautifully laced with sweet vanilla and subtle wood shavings.

The palate is precise and bold with delightful tension. Ripe raspberry and cinnamon lead with underlying layers of trimmed cigar and fine tannin.

Accolades

2015 Vintage:
2020 Platter's Guide – 4.5 Stars
2018 Platter's Guide – 4.5 Stars
Tim Atkin 93 Points

Analysis

pH 3.55
Total Acidity 6.0 g/l
Residual Sugar 4.4 g/l
Alcohol 14.3 %

