



Donkiesbaai

Steen

31°56'00.00"S

Wine of Origin Piekenierskloof

18°16'00.00"E

2024

Far up the west coast, about 3 and a half hours drive north of Cape Town, lies an open bay of white sand strewn with black mussels and kelp, with the icy waters of the Atlantic beating the shore. This is Donkiesbaai, where the Engelbrecht family have holidayed for four generations. This unassuming spot lends its name to our adventurous range of wines from a further-flung corner of South Africa's winelands. The wine was made with the cuisine of the west coast in mind. Crayfish, Harders, and a cold glass of wine is part of the history that is Donkiesbaai.

Vineyards

Certified heritage bush vines planted in 1988 and 1986 are dry-land farmed in deep sandy soils. At an altitude of 520m above sea level, the vineyards experience a warm climate with cooling evening winds. Grapes were harvested on six dates, with different picks providing a range of aromatic characters. Two early picks bring fresh acidity. Two middle picks add balance and perfectly ripe tropical fruit characters. The final two picks of smaller bunches and berries added deep concentration and palate weight to the resulting wine.

Winery

Our Steen is made up of three components: 70% is fermented and then matured in a combination of new and seasoned 500l French oak barrels. 30% is fermented spontaneously and matured on the lees in concrete eggs. Bâtonnage is done monthly for textural mouthfeel.

Tasting Note

A lovely complex nose of quince, pineapple, and cape gooseberry with pickled ginger, white blossoms and vanilla. The layered flavours continue onto the palate, rich and textured with subtle acidity, and a medium body. The intensity and richness of fruit on the palate make this a versatile pairing wine and indicate good aging potential.

Alcohol	13.71%	Acidity	5.8g/l
Residual Sugar.....	2.4g/l	pH	3.30





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Old Vine Project: Certified Heritage Vineyards

The Old Vine Project is a non-profit company that certifies the plant dates of vineyards that are 35 years and older. The interest in preserving old vines is two-fold. They form an important part of South Africa's winemaking history. But more importantly, old vines give more concentration, complexity, and particularly, more depth of mid-palate fruit compared to young vines.

Climate & Soil

The Donkiesbaai Steen is made using fruit from Certified Heritage Vineyards, which were certified through the Old Vine Project. The vineyards were planted in 1988 and 1986 respectively, and are unirrigated bush vines, planted on poor, sandstone soils. The vineyards are 650m above sea level, experiencing warm summer days with cool nights and relatively low winter rainfall of approximately 550mm per annum.

Vineyard

The Chenin Blanc is planted on Ramsey rootstock, which is vigorous with excellent drought tolerance and high water-use efficiency. The bush vines are planted at a low density, with 2780 vines per hectare, and 3m spacing between rows. The low density allows vines to thrive in a low rainfall area without irrigation. Also, considering ongoing climate change, low density, unirrigated vineyards are much less vulnerable to climatic drought compared to medium or high-density vineyards.

Vine Management

The vines are head trained bush vines. Pruning takes place in two steps; pre-pruning eliminates non-bearing canes, leaving a remaining 10 shoots. These are pruned down to two buds each during the second stage of pruning. During the growing season the canopy is managed through two rounds of suckering, followed by tipping and topping after fruit set. Leaf thinning is done surrounding bunches to provide ventilation and to maintain healthy clusters.



Look out for the Certified Heritage Vineyards Seal on the back label.