Thistle & Weed

2023

'KNAPSEKÊREL'

Cabernet Franc | *Stellenbosch - South Africa*

BIODYNAMIC VEGAN

Stats

Grapes: 100% Cabernet Franc
Vineyard: Oudeberg Vineyard (Polkadraai Hills)
Vine Age: 23-years-old
Soil Type: Fine granitic sand intermixed with marl
Viticulture: Practicing biodynamic
Fermentation: Inoculated – open-top stainless steel fermenters (15% whole-cluster)
Skin Contact: 7 days
Aging: 10 months in used 225L French oak barrels
Alcohol: 13.5%
pH: 3.8
Total Acidity: 5 g/L
Total SO2: 88 ppm
Total Production: 225 cases
UPC: 781718145626

Reviews

Tim Atkin MW | 95 points

About

The perennially opportunistic Knapsêkerel (Blackjack) gambles by spreading its seeds through wind, water, man and beast. The Blackjack is generally thought of as a weed but in many communities around the world it is used as a source of food and for medicinal purposes. This biodynamically farmed Cabernet Franc from the Oudeberg Vineyard in the Polkadraai area of Stellenbosch is littered with these beautiful weeds. Only seven rows are used for this small batch wine. This site is quite close to the ocean and because Steph and Etienne like their Cabernet Franc to be more on the elegant side, the coolness in the vineyard has brought out the perfect bouquet in the wine, with a fresh, crunchy palate. Fun fact: Knapsekêrel also means "handsome man" in Afrikaans.

The winemaking is quite rudimentary as the hard work was really done in the vineyard. The grapes were hand-harvested and 85% of the lot was destemmed with the berries kept intact and the remaining 15% was left whole-bunch. The wines fermented in stainless steel with ambient yeast. Frequent punchdowns by hand were employed to get a gentle extraction. After a week, the wine was dry and gently basket pressed, with only the free run juice and the first light pressing being used. The wine aged in used 225L French oak barrels where malolactic fermentation was carried out naturally. After ten months, the wine was bottled with just a sulfur dosage at bottling. No fining or filtering.

Tasting Note

This deep, inky wine gives off the most amazing scents of Thai basil and thyme. The palate is just as lovely, with raspberry, blueberry, and rose rose water joining the herbal motif. Delightful.