



Tembela Wines

2023

SYRAH

Stellenbosch - South Africa



NATURAL



ORGANIC



VEGAN

Stats

Grapes: 100% Syrah

Vineyard: Karibib Vineyard (80%) -
Langverwacht Vineyard (20%)

Vine Age: Average: 19-years-old

Soil Type: Mostly decomposed granite

Viticulture: Practicing organic

Fermentation: Native — open-top
plastic fermenter (100% de-stemmed
with 30% stems added back)

Skin Contact: 12 days

Aging: 13 months in old 500L oak
barrels

Alcohol: 13.5%

pH: 3.66

Total Acidity: 4.8 g/L

Total SO₂: 36 ppm

Total Production: 108 cases

Reviews

The WineMag | 90 points

Tim Atkin, MW | 92 points

Vinous | 93 points

About

Banele has been producing Syrah under his Tembela label now for four years. His vineyard sources have changed slightly each year, though in both 2022 and 2023, the esteemed Karibib Vineyard made up most of the site blend. This is the same site that wines like Lukas van Loggerenberg's ['Graft' Syrah](#) and Reenen Borman's ['Sons of Sugarland' Syrah](#) come from – which means this wine is in very, very good company. The sandy, decomposed granite soils of the Polkadraai Hills bring an inherent minerality and freshness to the wine. The remaining 20% of the grapes come from the Lanverwacht farm on the outskirts of Stellenbosch in Kuils River that also supplies fruit for the Savage Red. The 2023 vintage was great for Syrah in Stellenbosch with very long hang times, adding a lot of perfume and spice. As for the watercolor label, Banele wanted a simple painting that commemorated his mother, not just by her name, but by her image. Tembela is in the foreground with a basket on her head, and after much back and forth with the artist, Banele decided to add a second woman in the background to symbolize connections to community and place.

The grapes were harvested on separate days and brought back to the Savage Wines cellar where Banele vinifies his wines in Salt River. After de-stemming, about 30% stems were added back in according to their smell, aiming for black pepper but not too much astringency, before spontaneous fermentation began. About two punchdowns per day were made during fermentation, and when that was finished after about 12 days, the wine was transferred to old 500L barrels and left to mature for 13 months.

Tasting Notes

Fantastic, ethereal perfume this vintage of black pepper, fynbos, and violet against a core of black and red fruits. The medium-bodied palate is bursting with freshness and minerality, backed by fine tannins.

