



Craven

2021

CHARDONNAY

Stellenbosch - South Africa



NATURAL



ORGANIC



VEGAN

Stats

Grapes: 100% Chardonnay
Vineyard: Bluegum Grove Vineyard -
farmed by Danie Carinus
Vine Age: 18-years-old
Soil Type: Granitic sand
Viticulture: Practicing Organic
Fermentation: Native – neutral 500L
French tonneau
Skin Contact: None
Aging: 8 months in neutral 500L
French puncheons
Alcohol: 11.76%
pH: 3.23
Total Acidity: 6.7 g/L
Total SO₂: 50 ppm
Total Production: 250 cases
UPC: 6009803564676

Reviews

The WineMag | 90 points

About

Chardonnay is a grape Mick and Jeanine have always enjoyed drinking and it was only a matter of time before they decided to take the plunge and make a 'Craven' example. After looking around for a suitable vineyard, they decided to stay in the Polkadraai Hills for this. The small sub-region brings a real inherent saltiness and freshness to white wines. They reached out to local legend Danie Carinus about purchasing from fruit from his coveted Bluegum Grove Vineyard from fifth generation Stellenbosch vigneron Danie Carinus. 2021 saw slightly higher yields than previous years affected by the infamous drought, and regular cold fronts brought more precipitation than previous seasons. Ripening was consistently about 10-14 days later than the previous year, and the ripening period was moderate with only 8 hours above 35°C compared to the previous year's 41 hours above 35°C. The result was a very well-balanced, expressive Chardonnay.

The grapes were immediately whole-bunch pressed to tank and left to let the really heavy stuff settle. The next day the juice was racked into neutral 500L barrels, still quite dirty to promote a healthy fermentation, and remained there to complete malolactic fermentation. Primary fermentation lasted about two months with ML finishing considerably ahead of the primary. The lees was stirred every so often to reduce reduction. After 8 months of élevage in the same barrels, the wine was racked and bottled without fining or filtration and only a dose of SO₂ at bottling.

Tasting Note

The wine truly tastes like the Polkadraai – brininess, not massive over the top fruit, textural and the region is prominently showed in many ways more than the grape. That said the wine is unmistakably Chardonnay, and a fine one at that. Saline drops atop a bit of an apple juice with asian pear and a squeeze of lime. The texture on the palate is addictive with a bit of that apple skin and high toned acidity with hoarding tension. The wine is fresh and a perfect balance of savory notes and fruit.