



TEMBELA

Cape Town - South Africa

Background

Tembela is the personal label of Banele Vakele, the former assistant winemaker at Savage Wines. Banele is a cheerful, young man from Khayelitsha, a poor suburb of Cape Town; his winemaking journey was born from a mid-lecture high school daydream while staring out the window at a large vineyard. After pursuing a wine degree from Elsenburg Agricultural College, Banele gained invaluable experience through the Cape Winemaker's Guild Protégé program and internships at renowned wineries such as Ernie Els, Groot Constantia, and Savage Wines. He also cut his teeth during international stints at Troon Vineyards in Oregon, Domaine Chevrot in Burgundy, and Sunshine Creek in Australia's Yarra Valley. These experiences helped Banele to embrace a philosophy of place-based wines, spontaneous fermentation, and minimal intervention. Tembela, meaning 'faith,' 'hope,' and 'belief' in isiXhosa, was also the name of his late mother. With his infectious charisma and unwavering dedication to his craft, Banele is poised for big things.

Highlights

- 1 Tembela is a label by Banele Vakele, the former assistant winemaker at Savage Wines and mentee of Duncan Savage.
- 2 Banele's winemaking style is characterized by minimal intervention, low sulfur, and compelling aromatics.
- 3 The two wines, Chenin Blanc and Syrah, come from some of the "grand crus" of Stellenbosch.

Wines

SRP \$37



Chenin Blanc

This is a 100% whole-bunch Chenin from granite soils that ages and ferments in old oak barrels. It has a pithy texture and tangy acidity.



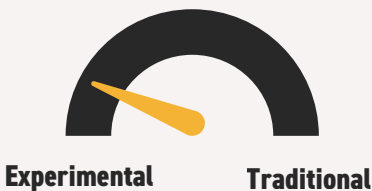
Syrah

After de-stemming, Banele likes to add about 30% of the stems back before fermentation to add black pepper aromatics. The wine ages in old 500L oak barrels.

Ethos



Packaging



Press

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Banele Vakele is a name to watch in the Cape, especially now that he's entirely focused on his own wines.

93 points

TIM ATKIN MW
Chenin Blanc 2024