EXCELSIOR

Excelsior Cabernet Sauvignon 2016

Cabernet Sauvignon is the most planted variety on the Estate making up 43% of all plantings. The soil is mainly limestone based, although a small portion comes from shale. The goal of the wine is to make wine that shows lots of fruit flavour, as well as soft tannins, whilst maintain a good structure. This is achieved via very strict canopy management to prevent shaded fruit and harvesting at optimal ripeness.

The grapes are harvested by hand for greater quality control. The wines are immediately destemmed but not crushed. Fermentation took place in stainless steel tanks for a period of 7 days at a temperature of between 28 and 32° Celsius. Aerated racking was done twice daily to ensure a clean ferment and soft tannins. The grapes were gently pressed in a bladder press, after which malo-lactic fermentation was completed in tank.

Aging
40% of the total wine was aged in a mixture of French and American oak for a period of 9 months, whilst the remaining wine was tank aged. All terroir units were aged separately and then combined at blending.

Vintage Conditions
This is widely regarded as the El Nino year in South Africa. The summer was hotter and riper than normal which required some adaptation in the vineyards to ensure a quality grape harvest. Grapes were harvested earlier than normal to ensure that there was freshness in the wines. The positive aspect of the drought was a very healthy crop with good concentration. The red wines from 2016 are rich and very structured.

Blend
Cabernet Sauvignon 90%, Petit Verdot 10%

Analysis
Alcohol 14.49%
Acidity 5.7g/l
pH 3.54
Residual Sugar 3.3g/l

Winemaker's notes
This Cabernet Sauvignon displays ripe blackcurrant, and dried herb characters on the nose, which are backed up with some spicy oak notes. The palate is smooth and soft, with beautiful ripe tannins and a long finish.

Food pairing by in-house chef
With the blackcurrant and dried herb character it's a spot-on choice to pare a juicy medium sirloin steak