

2018 SAUVIGNON BLANC



DURBANVILLE HILLS

(2018 SAUVIGNON BLANC)

BACKGROUND

Nine leading vineyard owners in the Durbanville district joined forces with Distell to create Durbanville Hills with the aim of promoting the regional individuality of this prime wine-growing area. The striking Durbanville Hills cellar sits on the side of a series of rolling hills with magnificent views of Table Mountain and Table Bay – the very geography that lies at the heart of what makes the wines so unique. The Durbanville ward is considered one of the Cape's coolest wine regions, thanks to the sea breezes that drift inland from False Bay and Table Bay and the late afternoon mists that bathe the slopes. These conditions are ideal for the slow ripening of the grapes, allowing them to develop their full-flavoured, intense character. Grapes are sourced only from the shareholder-growers, all of whom farm within the limited appellation of Durbanville. Meticulous canopy management promotes concentration of varietal flavour. Cellar master Martin Moore uses highly advanced cellar technology to ensure optimal extraction of colour and flavour.

Sustainable practices include maintaining the disciplines imposed by International Environmental Standard ISO 14001 such as in the treatment of waste water back to irrigation quality. In all its vineyards the growing practices prescribed by IPW (Integrated Production of Wine) are followed. These are designed to sustain natural resources. In addition, the members protect on their farms 320 ha of endangered Renosterveld.

THE VINEYARDS (VINEYARD CONSULTANT: DRIKUS HEYNS)

The grapes were sourced from seven of the nine Durbanville

Hills member farms where three farms have high altitude vineyards growing on the south-eastern slopes of the Hooge Berghs Valley. Cooled by mists and the southeaster, the lower than average temperatures make for slow ripening and intense flavour retention. Some grapes from low-lying, south-western facing vineyards on Maastricht, Bloemendal, Klein Roosboom and Oatlands were used to enhance the full-bodied character. The winter preceding the 2017 vintage was cold and wet followed by moderate and dry weather in November, December and January. The crucial flavour-producing ripening period for Sauvignon blanc grapes in February was much cooler than normal, resulting in high levels of crisp grassy and peppery flavours and the healthy grapes to ripened later than normal. The Sauvignon blanc varietal character of the grapes, especially from the higher slopes, was very strong producing wine with an abundance of tropical fruit characteristics. Some warmer spells ensured fuller blending components with lower acidity to produce a most enjoyable wine.

THE WINEMAKING

The grapes were hand-picked from the second week in February up to the second week in March at between 20, 5° and 24,5° Balling. Crushing and juice handling, varying from immediate draining to an average of four hours skin contact, was conducted under dry ice (CO₂) to preserve the typical delicate flavours that are fragile during these first stages of the winemaking process. Cold fermentation at 13°C to 15°C, followed by extended contact with the lees for almost two weeks, contributes to the full mouth-feel of the wine. The wines from the different vineyards were vinified separately according to the specific nature of the grapes and blended shortly before bottling.