

2013

Thorne & Daughters

ROCKING HORSE CAPE WHITE 2013

TASTING NOTES

Our Rocking Horse Cape White Blend takes its name from a wooden rocking horse that we made for our eldest daughter out of old oak barrel staves.

There's a lot going on aromatically in this wine. The initial orange blossom, peach and burnt sugar aromas give way to more exotic wax, rosemary, caraway and sea-shore notes. It is layered and complex, and evolves beautifully in the glass.

The palate is fine, structured and rich with flavours of quince and tea-leaf that settle into a long finish.

ROCKING HORSE NUTS & BOLTS

Roussanne (39%) - trellised vines, 8 years old, alluvial soils
Chardonnay (23%) - dryland bush vines
22 years old, shale and clay soils
Semillon blanc (23%) - trellised vines
30 years old, alluvial soils
Chenin blanc (15%) - dryland bush vines
33 years old, decomposed granite soils



Wine of Origin Western Cape
Vintage 2013

Alcohol 13.39%
Residual sugar 1.8 g/L
Total acidity 5.0 g/L
pH 3.48

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ABOUT THE WINE

Rocking Horse is our cornerstone wine. I've always thought of myself as primarily a white wine maker so this wine is something I have dreamed about making for a very long time. A Cape white blend that is the result of hand-picking intriguing parcels of grapes and hand-crafting the wine from start to finish.

Through the help of some great friends I managed to source a number of old vineyard parcels in the Cape from old bush vines Chardonnay and an old trellised Semillon blanc vineyard to some old bush vines Chenin blanc. The Roussane component is our 'edge' element. Although not modern in its own right, Roussane is a relative new-comer to the Cape, and having experienced the great wines that it can produce in the Rhone and Languedoc, I was keen for it to play a large role in our blend.

The winemaking is simple, but a lot of hands-on care (and an enormous amount of blood, sweat and tears) has gone into ensuring that the parcels are picked at the best time, the grapes arrive at the winery in really good condition and that the process of the winemaking itself is always in line with our wish to create beautifully structured wines with as natural an expression of the vineyards as possible.

Picking is done early and based mostly on taste with an eye on the style of the wine that I'm aiming at. I am not looking for a big alcohol expression (nor a low alcohol one for that matter) and prefer subtle wines that show ripeness, while being restrained and elegant.

The grapes are whole bunch pressed and no treatments or additions are used on the juice. This hands-off regime on the juice really helps to develop the character of the wine.

The juice is then racked off the heavy solids and taken to old oak barrels of various volumes, from the smaller 228L burgundian pieces to the larger 600L barrels. I don't have any new oak barrels in the cellar and most of the barrels range from 4-8 years old when I start using them. The wines are fermented naturally, and they are allowed to then go through their subsequent malolactic fermentation to further soften the wines. I watch them carefully for the next few months until they 'settle down', at which point I add a bit of sulphur dioxide to slow down the development during barrel ageing. Primary fruit is not what we are looking for here, rather we're trying to show the underlying character of the grapes and the vineyard where they came from.

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