

2013

Thorne & Daughters

TIN SOLDIER
SEMILLON 2013

TASTING NOTES

The colour of the wine is unusual, having taken some bright copper and bronze tones from its time on skins.

The nose is striking, with a briney, oyster-bed note coming out under subtle red fruit, licorice and white pepper notes.

The interplay between savoury and sweet is a key point of interest in Tin Soldier, and makes for a subtle and engaging wine. The palate is finely structured, with fresh acidity and full flavours of strawberry leaf, sweet herbs and pink peppercorn. It is dry and delicate, while at the same time showing a core of richness and depth.

TIN SOLDIER NUTS & BOLTS

Semillons blanc & gris (100%) - trellised vines,
30 years old, alluvial soils

Wine of Origin Western Cape
Vintage 2013

Alcohol 13.13%
Residual sugar 2.1 g/L
Total acidity 4.8 g/L
pH 3.52



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RAISING OUR HANDCRAFTED WINES ALONG WITH OUR TWO DAUGHTERS



ABOUT THE WINE

Tin Soldier is a wine that we hope will draw like-minded people into good conversations about it. It is made from a field blend of white and red Semillon grapes. Red Semillon (or Semillon gris) is a natural mutation of white Semillon that is still found in small pockets of Semillon vineyards in the Cape. It is not a black-skinned grape like Shiraz, or Cabernet sauvignon, but rather a gris variety, having a rose-coloured skin.

If we go back 100 years, Semillon was responsible for probably 95% of the wine made in this country. Tim James' research on the variety suggests that the red mutation may at one time have been even more common than the white. I'm really fascinated by the idea of the kind of wines that would have been made in the old days using these mixed vineyards, and this led me to the idea of fermenting a blend of the white and red Semillon.

The Semillon gris appeals to me simply because it is incredibly South African in that no significant plantings are found anywhere else in the world. As it is, it is extremely rare now in South African vineyards, and we were obliged to pick small amounts from vines dotted around in an old white Semillon vineyard.

The one thing I wanted to avoid was making a 'gimmick' wine. In the run up to the first harvest I was still considering what my approach might be and while walking through the vineyard and tasting the grapes, I began to formulate an idea of fermenting white and red Semillon together on their skins to build a structure into the wine and hopefully extract some of that wonderful colour. Fermenting a white wine on skins extracts some grape tannins which a lot of modern white winemaking tends to avoid. I've managed the extraction very carefully to retain a delicacy in the wine, while bringing out a lot of complexity. It is truly a wine we love.

All of our wines take their names from archetypal childrens' toys, and Tin Soldier takes its name from Semillon's status as the old footsoldier of the South African industry. Much like the old toy soldiers buried in the garden, Semillon has been reduced to a mere shadow of its former glory days in the Cape.

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