2016

Thorne & Daughters

Rocking Horse Cape White 2016

TASTING NOTES

Rocking Horse is our cornerstone wine and takes its name from a wooden rocking horse that we made for our daughters out of old oak barrel staves.

The wine is composed from a number of carefully selected vineyard sites in the Western Cape. The aromas are of lime leaf, white peach, exotic woods, and rosemary. In the mouth, the wine starts broad and rich, resolving into a keen line of acidity supported by a gentle tannin.

ROCKING HORSE NUTS & BOLTS

Semillon blanc – 27% Franschhoek
33 years old on alluvial soils
Chardonnay – 25% Overberg 25 years old – shale soils
Roussanne – 20% Voor Paardeberg
11 years old - clay/decomposed granite
Clairette blanche – 17% Stellenbosch
33 years old – decomposed granite soil
Chenin blanc – 9% Bottelary
35 years old - decomposed granite soil
Viura – 2% Voor Paardeberg – 4 years old – alluvial soil

Wine of Origin Western Cape
Vintage 2016

Alcohol 13%
Residual sugar 1.5 g/L
Total acidity 5.6 g/L
pH 3.26

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hello@thorneanddaughters.com • www.thorneanddaughters.com

Raising our handcrafted wines along with our two Daughters

ABOUT THE WINE

We have put an enormous amount of work into sourcing intriguing heritage vineyards that form the backbone of this wine. The 2016 vintage was challenging due to the effects of an extended drought in the Western Cape. Warm and dry conditions meant that more than ever, picking early was crucial to retaining acidity and freshness in the wines. That being said, the crop was small and concentrated and there were certainly great wines to be made. Chenin blanc in particular was hard-hit by the drought, and yields on dryland bushvine sites were extremely low.

Our vineyard selection supports our vision to deliver a blended Cape White wine of depth, texture and subtlety. In sourcing Roussanne, Chardonnay, Semillon, Clairette blanche and Chenin blanc, we are looking for both heritage and young vineyards which all bring their own unique elements and ability to 'speak' about the place in which they are grown.

The winemaking remains simple. Our primary challenge during the harvest is to ensure that we pick all of our far-flung blocks at the right time and get them back to the winery in perfect condition. Once this is achieved, we revert to working with very little in the way of 'winemaking technique'.

Picking is done early and based mostly on taste with an eye on the style of the wine that we're aiming at. We are 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. The wines are fermented naturally, and they are allowed to then go through their subsequent malolactic fermentation. We watch them carefully for the next few months until they 'settle down', at which point we add some sulphur dioxide. 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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