

ALMENKERK WINE ESTATE CHARDONNAY 2013

SINGLE VINEYARD WINE



The grapes used to make this wine are all from the same block, called *Annabelle* after our eldest daughter. This sandy loam block is located on the coldest site of the farm, providing the Chardonnay vines with the required cold units to bud uniformly year after year. The vines are not irrigated throughout the ripening season, forcing them to dig their roots deeper in search of water. The block is guaranteed frost throughout the winter, ensuring even budding & ripening every year.

Through the use of NDVI photography and satellite images, we have split the block into 2 units that are picked on different days in order to get full ripeness for the respective vigour zones.

HARVEST NOTES

Picking decisions at Almenkerk are made by tasting the grapes daily during the harvest season. With Chardonnay, we look for phenolic ripeness while retaining the natural acidity our cool climate offers us.

Prior to harvest we get a small team to walk the 13 rows and throw off any bunches that are not perfectly healthy or fully ripe.

Harvesting takes place early morning to keep the grape temperature low. All grapes are hand-picked into small lug boxes to prevent compaction. Meticulous sorting is done in the vineyard and again at the cellar. Since we do not use sulfur in the early stages of the winemaking process, selection of only the healthiest grapes is crucial. We do a double sorting in the vineyard and a last sorting at the cellar to ensure clean fruit flavours.

The various vigour-zones are picked & vinified separately to allow the blending decision to be postponed as long as possible.

WINEMAKING

After gentle pressing and cold settling, the wine is gravity-fed into small French oak barrels 25% new wood (225L & 300L) and left to start natural (wild yeast) fermentation. Completing fermentation can take from 3 weeks to 3 months for specific barrels.

After fermentation, the wine undergoes lees contact for 9 months on the gross lees with regular stirring. All batches & barrel treatments are kept separately. Each barrel gets assessed individually for its suitability in our Almenkerk range.

TASTING NOTES

The complex nose leads with fresh fruit aromas of lemon & clementine complemented with a floral tone that underscores its minerality. The zesty palate is softened by the lees contact, leading to a lingering finish. Typical Elgin cool-climate elegance.

This wine will complement fattier and rich fish dishes as sashimi or prepared, as well as cooked shellfish. It works well with seared foie gras, complex salads and most cheeses.

Will drink youthfully for the next 2-5 years and can be cellared up to 10 years.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Top 100 SA Wines 2014

WINE ANALYSIS

pH: 3.38

TA: 7.5 g/L

Alc: 13.93%

RS: 4.2 g/L

VINEYARD

Aspect	South facing lower slope
Elevation	189-201m ASL
Soil type	lighter textured clayey-loam soils (Tukulu, Escourt)
Clone	CY3
Rootstock	101-14 Mgt.
Planting year	2005
Ha planted	0.6 ha
Average tons	12 tons p/ha
Irrigation	Drip irrigation, post-harvest exclusively
Vines per ha	2424 vines (1.5m spacing, 2.75m rows)
Trellis system	5-wire moveable VSP (Vertical Shoot Positioning)
Harvest dates	1 March - 4 March 2013

