

*Wine is a peep-hole on a man.
Alcaeus c.625-c.575 BC
Fragment 104*

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NEW WINEMAKER FOR TUKULU

When Samuel Viljoen says he grew up in the Kalahari, a picture of an arid desert springs to mind rather than lush rolling vineyards. But then he explains that his grandfather owned a wine farm and was an active member of the Badsberg Co-op near Rawsonville, and things fall into place: winemaking is in the genes.

His father was a 'dominee' (pastor) in a place called Deben about an hour's drive from Kuruman in the Northern Cape, but the family moved to Bredasdorp when Samuel, the youngest of five children, was four years old and he completed his schooling there before registering for a B.Sc. Oenology and Viticulture at Stellenbosch University. In addition to his grandfather being a wine farmer, his brother Kobie also studied winemaking at Stellenbosch and encouraged Samuel to do the same.

Samuel has worked at a few wineries in the Cape Winelands, with a 3-year stint at Goudini winery and a harvest at Domaine Serene in Oregon being the most significant.

"I leapt at the chance of working at the Nederburg cellar," explains Samuel enthusiastically, "and was thrilled to have been given the task of making the Tukulu wines. There are very experienced winemakers here that can teach me a lot, but there is also space to try new things and experiment."

Samuel is going to be very busy for the next few weeks as the first batch of grapes from Tukulu arrived on Monday, 28 January. "The first grapes are looking good, so I am excited to get started," he says.



AWARDS AND RATINGS

TUKULU WINS BEE AWARD

Papkuilsfontein Farm Manager Hennie van der Westhuizen was recently informed by Rudnet, the Rural Development Network) that the farm had achieved second place in the BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) Category of the Farm Health Award Programme 2007.

Tukulu Wines are grown on the Papkuilsfontein farm, which is a joint venture between Distell, a consortium of black entrepreneurs and a trust representing the local farming community. Structured to become fully black owned, the project was created to promote broader land ownership and greater skills development within the wine industry.

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The Farm Health Award Programme, which is run by Rudnet, was introduced in 2003 to give recognition to producers who have committed themselves to the empowerment and development of their farm worker communities and for the promotion and acknowledgement of sound labour relations.

The Rural Development Network (RUDNET) is a network of organisations committed to enhancing the quality of life of farm-working communities through the provision of a cohesive and sustainable programme of integrated and quality development services.

For more info visit www.rudnet.org.za.

TUKULU CHENIN BLANC 2007 WINS BEST UNWOODED WINE AT THE WINE MAGAZINE CHENIN BLANC CHALLENGE 2008

Wine Magazine has announced that the Tukululu Chenin Blanc 2007 has been selected as the Best Unwooded Chenin Blanc in the Wine Magazine Chenin Blanc Challenge 2008.

There were 122 wines assessed and after rigorous screening 34 wines went through to the second round.

The grapes for this wine were grown on the Papkuilsfontein farm in the Groenekloof ward near Darling. They were harvested from bush vines that were planted in 1994 and managed by viticulturist Adian Fry.

With a low yield of 7 tons per hectare, the grapes were harvested towards the end of January, cool-fermented in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks and a portion received extended skin contact. Only the free-run juices were used and the wine was left on the lees for just over two months to gain complexity.

Samuel Viljoen, Tukululu Winemaker, describes the wine as having floral, green apple and citrus aromas on the nose and a crisp and fresh mouth feel with apple and citrus repeated on the palate.



ALLESVERLOREN TRIUMPHS IN SWEDEN



Allesverloren Estate – the oldest wine farm in the Swartland, famous for its acclaimed Shiraz – took top honours in Sweden with its 2006 vintage clinching the title of Red Wine of the Year for 2007.

The Allesverloren Shiraz 2006 was selected as Sweden's red wine of choice at the annual awards of *Allt om Vin*, the country's prestigious wine magazine, by a panel of judges consisting of 33 leading wine writers.

Made from grapes handpicked from low-yielding vines planted in 1969, this full-bodied Shiraz is rich in aromas of ripe plums, raspberries and prunes with dried fruit and a hint of cigar box on the nose. The palate has a delicate fruity complexity of ripe plums and prunes with a well-rounded finish and a good tannic structure.

This is not the first time that owner and winemaker Danie Malan, the fifth generation of the Malan family on the estate, excelled with his distinctive Shiraz. One of the many highlights over the past decade includes the honour of the Diners Club Winemaker of the Year Award for his superb 1996 Allesverloren Shiraz.

NEWS

NEW CELLAR FOR LE BONHEUR

When asked how the new cellar at Le Bonheur looks, winemaker Sakkie Kotze simply says: "Come and see for yourself."

He is quite proud of the new maturation cellar and store, and also of the renovated original cellar, which now sports a new roof amongst other minor improvements.

He's looking forward to taking in the first grapes of the 2008 harvest which he says are of excellent quality. "We'll start with the Sauvignon Blanc in a few days, but the cool summer has caused the red varieties, especially the Cabernet, to ripen a lot later than usual. So I guess I'll be in the cellar over the Easter weekend, which means no fishing trip for me!"



For more info call (021) 875 5478 or visit www.lebonheur.co.za.

TASTING IN COMFORT AT PLAISIR DE MERLE

Another Cape Legends farm to get a revamp is Plaisir de Merle: the Tasting Centre was renovated just in time for the summer season and the expected influx of visitors to the Cape Winelands.

The centre was once an old barn, built in 1823, and adjoins the picturesque 18th century Homestead. It has a relaxed lounge atmosphere, where visitors can sample wines at their leisure, ensconced in comfy couches and fine surroundings.

This new approach to wine tasting is designed to expand the whole experience and allow visitors to absorb not only the pleasures of the wine, but at the same time, enjoy a glimpse of a gracious era long past.

The modernized Tasting Centre is versatile enough to accommodate both small and large groups. And the use of folding doors extends the area without compromising the authenticity and elegance of the surroundings, so it is perfect for both small intimate parties and larger tour groups.

For more information call (021) 874 1071 or visit www.plaisirdemerle.co.za.