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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ...**KOBUS GERBER, WINEMAKER OF LOMOND WHITE WINES**

"I strive towards capturing the fundamental essence of Lomond grapes that hail from this unique location and to create special wines that distinguish themselves by showcasing their exceptional origin," says Kobus Gerber.

This distinctive Cape Agulhas winery known for its single-vineyard wines is situated in the Uilenkraals River valley near Gansbaai, at the very southerly latitude of 34° 34', just 8 km from the sea as the crow flies. It is home to as many as 18 different soil forms and covers a range of altitudes and aspects to offer a spectrum of growing conditions that make for an intriguing complexity in the profile of its wines.

To demonstrate the diversity of its terroir, the Lomond white wine range comprises two single-vineyard Sauvignon Blancs – growing in adjoining vineyards mere metres apart, the grapes for these two wines produced completely distinct aromas and flavours in different soils – as well as an estate Sauvignon Blanc and a white blend called Snowbush that consists of 50 % Sauvignon blanc, 27% Semillon and 23% Nouvelle.

Highlighting the rich bio-diversity of the farm all the wines are aptly named after the most prolific species of fynbos found in the area.

"The white wines from the 2008 vintage already show great varietal character and have the potential to gain even further complexity with maturation over the next three to five years," said Kobus.

In the cellar, Kobus handled the grapes especially gently to preserve the concentrated, natural flavours of the grapes as he believes that they simply give another dimension to the wine.

Backed by Wayne Gabb, the wine-grower in charge of Lomond's vineyards, Kobus can work his magic in the cellar with the superb Lomond grapes. This duo, responsible for bringing in the 2008 harvest, is extremely optimistic about this year's wines that are already showing huge potential.

This year's harvest started a week later than the previous year mainly due to the good rest of the vines through dormancy from a colder than normal winter and a fairly wet and cool spring. However, this did not influence the flowering and good fruit set was achieved with healthy bunches.



Nouvelle, predominantly used for blending, was harvested first at a lower sugar level to obtain its distinctive flavours of grassiness, asparagus and litchi. Next were the Sauvignon blanc grapes where the various blocks were harvested at varying sugar levels to gain the full spectrum of flavours on offer for the estate wine. The two single-vineyards were harvested in one picking at optimal ripeness to maintain the distinctive differences between the two therefore enhancing the single vineyard concept by showing the variation in terroir of the area.

The slow ripening process resulting from the cool maritime breezes enabled the winemaking team to harvest these grapes with good flavours and high natural acidities. The Viognier was picked at optimum ripeness and showed very encouraging flavours of peach and herbaceousness.

“All in all, the 2008 vintage stood out particularly with the weather conditions experienced over the ripening period. This allowed the grapes to mature more slowly and naturally producing optimum ripeness,” is how Gabb sums up this year’s harvest.

AWARDS

CAPE LEGENDS WINES STRIKE GOLD AT 2008 CONCOURS MONDIAL DE BRUXELLES



Two stalwart wines in the prestigious Cape Legends portfolio stood out at the 2008 Concours Mondial de Bruxelles in Bordeaux, France by winning gold medals in their respective categories.

Stellenzicht Syrah 2001, the multi award winning Shiraz produced in the famous “Golden Triangle” on the slopes of the Helderberg, earned its 4th international gold medal and 6th overall, at this prestigious competition. Plaisir de Merle Cabernet Sauvignon 2005 also walked off with a gold medal from the 2008 Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, hot on the heels of its exciting gold medal win at the Swiss International Airlines Wine Awards.

The award winning 2001 Stellenzicht Syrah vintage outclassed all other South African Shiraz producers last year with a top 10 ranking and gold medal at the inaugural international 2007 Syrah du Monde Awards. This wine also won a gold medal at the prestigious International Wine and Spirit Competition in 2005 and a Grand Gold at Mundus Vini in 2004. On home soil, this Syrah has also done well at South African wine competitions, with gold medals at Veritas and the Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show.



The wine made by Cellarmaster Guy Webber, comes from a single vineyard, known affectionately as “Plum Pudding Hill” which produces excellent grapes vintage after vintage resulting in fine wines with a strong sense of place that can hold their own with the best in the world.

Cellarmaster Niel Bester has really put Plaisir de Merle on the map when it comes to internationally sought-after wines. Only last month Plaisir de Merle was honoured overseas once again, this time at Quebec’s Gastronomic Festival, for its Cabernet Sauvignon 2004. This time the vintage also earned a gold medal in its category in the Cup of Nations 2008. Cellarmaster Niel Bester is fond of saying: “I like to make wines that will be acceptable internationally,” and it seems his ambition is taking off fast.

NEWS FROM THE FARMS

STELLENZICHT WINES PROMOTED IN TURKEY

Winemaker Guy Webber joined celebrity chef Pete Goffe-Wood on a week-long promotion of South African food and wine in Turkey at the Mövenpick Hotel, Istanbul.

Authentic South African dishes paired with a Stellenzicht or Hill&Dale wine were served during the weeklong promotion, co-sponsored by the Mövenpick, Qatar Airways, ADCO (Stellenzicht agents in Turkey) and the South African Embassy in Ankara.

Pete and his assistant, Bruce von Presentin did a wonderful job of matching their menu to the wines. The menu comprised the following:



- Traditional pickled fish with fennel and crème fraiche – *Hill&Dale Sauvignon Blanc 2007*
- Tuna loin with masoor dhal and tomato & cumin chutney – *Hill&Dale Pinotage 2005*
- Smoked venison loin with preserved lemon & date achar and black onion seed poppadoms – *Stellenzicht Golden Triangle Pinotage 2006*
- Ostrich fillet with Cape Malay-spiced cauliflower puree – *Stellenzicht Golden Triangle Shiraz 2004*
- Caramelised goats cheese with honey, fig & almond tart – *Stellenzicht Golden Triangle Pinotage 2006*

“It was an absolute HIT with the pairings being spot-on. All the guests were very interested in talking about the foods, wines and the country in general,” said Guy.

Guy was also fortunate enough to be able to spend some time out in the trade with members of the ADCO team, visiting some wonderful hotels and restaurants and introducing them to his wines.

“There are currently not a whole lot of South African wines available in Turkey although they were very well received everywhere we showed them. Pinotage especially seems to find favour amongst the wine drinkers as it tends to match up well to their often-spicy foods. They are also very interested in Shiraz in general and I noticed that their local producers are now starting to grow this variety with some seriousness,” said Guy who describes Turkey as a place he needs to visit again soon.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SOUTH OF THE BORDER FESTIVAL

Put on your *Sombrero* and *poncho* and make your way to Neethlingshof for a truly Mexican affair during the estate's South of the Border festival on Saturday, 17 May from

11:00 till 16:00. Relish in traditional Mexican street food or pre book a hot platter at R200 each. The best dressed family will win picnic vouchers and traditional Pinatas. The entrance fee of R50 per person includes a food and wine pairing, a branded glass, a special tasting of the 2008 vintages, exclusive access to the autumn sale stock, beaded bracelet and corn bites for the little ones and one free entry to the Pesos for Pinotage competition where a 300 litre barrel of wine is up for grabs. For bookings contact Lucille on Tel: 021 883 8988.

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