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**A DAY AT NEETHLINGSHOF**

Neethlingshof Estate, situated in the heart of the Cape Winelands at the entrance to Stellenboschkloof, on high lying, south facing slopes which are part of the Lynedoch hills, are acclaimed producers of award-winning wines with a passionate commitment towards eco-sustainability, striving to give back to nature.

As a member of the Biodiversity & Wine Initiative (BWI), the winery rigorously follows the Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) guidelines, the wine industry's handbook for environmental sustainable farming practices, thereby allowing the vineyards to thrive whilst safeguarding the pristine habitat around them.

In keeping with these objectives, the 378ha wine farm has set aside 127 ha for conservation. Great care has been taken to conserve and rehabilitate areas of indigenous habitat, particularly the unique ecosystems surrounding the estate's granite hills. Furthermore, the estate also follows an integrated pest management programme that forms part of its focus on production integrity to reduce the dependence on pesticides.



With the help of Myke Scott, the Neethlingshof vineyard team has been striving to recreate the balance between vineyard developments and natural fynbos and indigenous renosterveld (rhino fields). Where necessary vineyards were uprooted and replaced with renosterveld species which previously occurred naturally in this environment. Renosterveld islands were also created within existing vineyards to promote the return of beneficial, natural insects that used to frequent the winelands years ago. The eradication of exotic plant species is also an ongoing process throughout the estate.

Winemaker De Wet Viljoen and renowned viticulturist Eben Archer both took over the reigns in their respective positions at Neethlingshof in 2003, teaming up to replan the whole farm and implementing a comprehensive replanting programme.

Throughout the entire winemaking process at Neethlingshof balance and elegance are of the utmost importance for the winemaking team. From harvesting the first bunch of grapes right through to the bottling of the wines the winemaking team takes the greatest care to ensure the best possible quality of wine in each and every bottle.

Neethlingshof is acclaimed for its terrific terroir, boasting nine different micro climates and altitudes that range from 85 to 250m above sea level. A total of 162ha are planted under vines. The area devoted to red wines totals 82ha with Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon dominating. Other varietals include Pinotage, Merlot, Malbec, Petit Verdot and Cabernet franc. Whites account for 80ha with Sauvignon blanc most extensively planted, followed by Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. Other varietals include Weisser Riesling, Chenin blanc and Viognier.

## NEWS FROM THE FARMS

### Hill&Dale website sports new blogging page

In keeping with the latest marketing trends, acclaimed winemaker, Guy Webber, now voices his thoughts on a new blogging page, aptly named “*On the Couch with Guy Webber*”, and is located on the Hill&Dale website. Guy intends to spend quite a bit of his spare time here, keeping his updates in line with the brand's theme of “It's in our Nature” which seems to fit both his mischievous and serious side as well as it does the brand.



### On the Couch with Guy Webber



The Hill&Dale blog should not be seen as a mere “wine blog” for sniffing and spitting, but rather as a platform for having some fun covering subjects such as the wines, people, industry, life in general or whatever is on this acclaimed winemaker's mind at the time of writing.

With October known as the windy season, see Guy's latest update at [www.hillanddale.co.za](http://www.hillanddale.co.za), covering news on the black south-easter that wreaked havoc in their area. Luckily Hill&Dale's strategically planted windbreaks served their purpose by sheltering the vines.

### Plaisir de Merle Sauvignon Blanc takes centre stage at Genot Restaurant

Celebrating the arrival of spring, Chef Mark Radnay of Genot restaurant at Klein Genot Wine & Country Estate in Franschhoek selected wonderful seasonal ingredients as the perfect taste partner to the Plaisir de Merle Sauvignon Blanc 2008, one of the best sellers in the restaurant.



Cape Salmon baked in the oven with lemon and butter served with crisp asparagus, the newest baby potatoes, classic sauce Vierge made with garden ripe plum tomatoes, fragrant basil and spring onions, makes for a light and easy dish that perfectly encapsulates the freshness and flavours of spring.

Chef Radnay matched this delicious dish with the 2008 vintage of Plaisir de Merle's Sauvignon Blanc as it complements and balances the dish to perfection whilst enhancing the freshness and taste of all the ingredients, particularly the asparagus and the sauce Vierge. This delectable combination truly sets the mood for warm balmy days in the sun.

## Theuniskraal firm favourite in Namibia

The president of Namibia, Hifikepunye Lucas Pohamba, (left) is one of many new Theuniskraal followers introduced to the wines at a tasting hosted by the Stellenbosch Tourism Bureau at the 2009 Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair in Namibia.



## AWARDS

### Jacobsdal artisanal wines chosen by top UK critics

Two vintage Jacobsdal wines, a 1999 Pinotage and a 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon, have been chosen for Britain's prestigious Octavian Vaults Library Collection.

Featuring five and ten year old vintages chosen for their longevity, the wines in the collection were judged blind. The panel of leading international wine experts including Tim Atkin MW, Sam Harrop MW, Charles Metcalfe and Derek Smedley MW, chose just three South African wines for the annual line-up, this year dominated by European producers.

Jacobsdal, situated between Stellenbosch and Kuils River and overlooking False Bay, has been in the Dumas family for three generations. The grapes are harvested by hand from untrellised, low-yielding bush vines grown entirely under dryland conditions, producing outstanding quality fruit with deep concentration of flavour.



The Octavian Vaults Library Collection judges praised the 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon, still available for sale in limited quantities, for its "opaque, restrained aroma, cassis, liquorice notes and fine-framed tannin", describing it as "well-balanced and elegant" and as having a "drinking window" from now to 2019.



### Cape Legends clinches two Gold medals at Veritas

Cape Legends has excelled with two golds and 17 silver medals at this year's prestigious Veritas Awards.

The two gold medal achievers are the Le Bonheur Prima 2005 and the Neethlingshof Sauvignon Blanc Special Release 2009.

### Cape Legends lauded sky high

Two Cape Legends stalwarts have been chosen by South Africa's national air carrier, South African Airways (SAA), to be served aboard during 2010. Hill&Dale Chardonnay 2009 will be served in Economy Class, whilst the Uitkyk Carlonet 2006 will be showcased in the Premium Class cabin.



### Hill&Dale Sauvignon Blanc perfect picnic partner

The Hill&Dale recipe and wine pairing challenge, run in association with [www.food24.co.za](http://www.food24.co.za), focuses on the Hill&Dale Sauvignon Blanc and mouth-watering picnic lunch recipes for November. With over 300 000 unique monthly impressions Hill&Dale will be top of mind amongst their regular food lovers especially with a case of wine up for grabs for the most free-spirited picnic lunch recipe.

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### Flat Roof Manor rewards cool cat stories

Flat Roof Manor's 'purrfect' on-line promotion in association with the trendy fashion and lifestyle [www.channel24.co.za](http://www.channel24.co.za) and [www.woman24.co.za](http://www.woman24.co.za) give their 350 000 site visitors the opportunity to win a case of reds for the coolest gift idea.

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