



The Butcher's Pour

South Africa... The Wines... The Cape Floral Kingdom



The Regions

Stellenbosch

Not only is Stellenbosch home to one of the first wine routes in the world; it is also known as the business, educational, and research center of The Cape Winelands. Stellenbosch is divided into seven wards; Simonsberg-Stellenbosch containing some of the most prestigious wineries. Between the mountainous terrain, good rainfall, and well draining soils this diverse terroir is ideal for most varieties, but the red blends are what really take center stage.

Paarl

Located around the second-largest granite out crop in the world; this district is surrounded by the Groot & Klein Mountains, and the Franschhoek Ranges. The two wards to keep an eye out for are Voor Paardeberg and Simonsberg-Paarl. The soils are comprised of sandstone near the river, granite around the town of Paarl, and then Shale to the north. The most popular varieties are Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, and Shiraz.

Swartland

Named for the indigenous Renosterveld vegetation that will turn the scape black (swart) at certain times of the year. This district was traditionally known for growing grain, but also contains some of the oldest vineyards in South Africa (90+ years.) In the beginning bushvines were planted to protect them against the heat and lack of rainfall, but newer vineyards are increasingly trellised. Old vine Chenin Blanc, Shiraz, and Cape Blends are the most produced wines.

Constantia

A coastly influenced district made famous by Simon van der Stel when he planted a vineyard on his farm in 1685. Although the climate here is a more mild with cool breezes from the False Bay the area is known for sweeter fortified style wines and Sauvignon Blanc.

The Five Geographical Size Designations

Geographical Unit

Catch-all appellation allowing for multi-regional blends

Region

Larger areas which follow dominant geographical features

District

Smaller arena which can vary in size but are linked by environmental feature

Ward

Areas of similar soil and geography producing wines of a distinct style

Single Vineyard

Areas of less than six hectares consisting of a single variety

Tasting Notes

Honey Bunch Reserve Chenin Blanc 2019

100% Hand Harvested Chenin Blanc

Notes: Jumps out of your glass with pears, white peaches, honeysuckle, and lime. On the palate the wine is creamy and rich.

Pairing: You could reasonably pair anything with this wine. It is just that good!

Soaring Eagle 2019

1 Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Shiraz

Notes: Red cherry and black currant with notes of cedar, vanilla, and an earthy lingering finish

Pairing: Grilled meats, even some heavier grilled seafoods.

Nate Valleij

100% Cinsault

Notes: The body here is pretty medium personally with lots of fun spice and fresh red fruits.

Pairing: The acidity in this wine makes it perfect for food. Charcuterie, pork chops, or fresh sausage

Noble Hill 2016

196% Cabernet Sauvignon 2% Cabernet Franc
2% Petit Verdot

Notes: Rich black fruits, with an elegant woodsiness that is complimented by cassis and mint.

Pairing: Grilled steaks... Denver, Chuckeye, or Ribeye



South African Wine History

The Cape was established as a refreshment station by the Dutch East India Trading Company in 1652, and what started out as a destination for the company's merchant fleet to restock on supplies eventually gave way to a flourishing wine industry. Jan Van Riebeeck was the first governor of The Cape, and began planting vines in 1655. It wasn't until February 2, 1659 that the first wine was made from cape grapes.

Eventually Van Riebeeck was succeeded by Simon van der Stel in 1679, and some improvements were seen in winemaking when he planted a vineyard on his farm in Constantia. Since the Dutch didn't have a longstanding history with viticulture; it wasn't until the French Huguenots settled at The Cape between 1680-1690 that the winemaking really began to prosper.

The Cape Floral Kingdom

There are six floral kingdoms in the world; the Cape Floral Kingdom being the smallest, but also the most varied on the planet; being home to over 10,000 different species flora and fauna, many not being found anywhere else in the world. With about 95% of South Africa's wine being produced in this region it was obviously taking a toll on indigenous species. There are now multiple initiatives in place to protect the land including: Sustainable Wine South Africa, Integrated Production of Wine, and Bio Diversity & Wine Initiative.

The Wineries

Rehoogte

- Winemaker: Chris Boustred
- Located in Stellenbosch
- Minimalist approach both in the vineyard and in the cellar. Everything is done by hand.
- Members of the Integrated Production of Wine Scheme and Bio Diversity & Wine Initiative

Noble Hill

- Winemaker: Kristopher Tillery
- Located in Simonsberg-Paarl
- Organic farming
- Minimal Intervention Winemaking

Natte Valleij

- Once upon a time famed for brandy production
- Located in the coastal region
- Stopped producing wine in 1950's and just started making wine again in 2005
- Again everything done by hand...

"Grapes are picked by hand, bottled by hand, corked by hand, labeled by hand, and most definitely drunk by hand..."



Sources:

Winefolly.com
wosa.co.za
remhoogte.co.za
noblehill.com
Nate Valleij.co.za

For The People

There are a number of initiatives to keep your eye out for when shopping for South African Wine; even past the Integrity & Sustainability labels that you will see on several bottles from South Africa. One of the most notable is Fair Trade; with 75% of all Fair Trade wines coming from South Africa. This is a global certification to ensure fair prices, improved living and labor conditions, and also promoting sustainable farming for the future. The next is Wine Industry Ethical Trade Association; a non-profit committed to ethical trading and safeguarding worker condition. Like much of the world, South Africa is working toward better representing the entirety of their population. Even more empowerment initiatives are being put in place to make sure that land and profits go to those who deserve them most. The Cape Winemakers Guild Protege Programme and the Pinotage Youth Development Academy select students interested in viticulture from disadvantaged backgrounds to help mentor and train them.