

2013

Vintage Report




ANNO. 1695
KLEINE ZALZE
STELLENBOSCH

With an exceptionally cold and wet winter in 2012, we had every reason to be excited about the 2013 vintage. The cool and wet conditions continued into early spring and caused a delay in bud-break of between 7 and 14 days. This delay was dependent on the specific site, soil type and pruning date. Initial growth was slow, once again as a result of cooler temperatures and wet, cold soils. As soon as temperatures started to rise, the vigour of the vines returned and a sudden spurt of shoot growth followed. The dry and mild conditions in early November ensured favourable conditions for flowering and berry set.

At the end of November 2012, the 'Black South-Easter' (the strong, persistent and dry southeasterly wind) wreaked havoc in many parts of Stellenbosch. Many vineyards suffered extensive damage and in some almost all the leaves and shoots were literally blown away! Fortunately, the shoots of all our vineyards were safely secured within the trellising wires before the wind swept through. This, combined with the fact that our row direction followed the wind direction, rather than running perpendicularly to it, meant that damage was limited to only a few topped shoots.

December was unusually warm, with 20 days above 30°C and virtually no rain. Fortunately, due to the wet and prolonged winter, the soil water level was sufficient to support the vines during these hot spells.

The favourable soil water levels ensured that canopies could develop fully and hence, ensure adequate protection of the grapes. Owing to this, the occurrence of sunburn, particularly with regards to the Chenin Blanc bush vines which are prone to it, was very limited. The thicker canopies also meant that the Sauvignon Blanc grapes produced more intense flavour profiles.

Kleine Zalze's 2013 harvest started almost 7 days later than in 2012. During ripening and harvest, the mild day temperatures and relatively cool night temperatures ensured even ripening and good flavour retention in the whites. The reds presented phenolic ripeness and full-colour development at an earlier stage. Regular rain during the ripening period kept the soil from drying out and the vines from experiencing water stress. The rain did cause slight complications with the harvesting and the importance of correct timing with regards to picking was emphasised.

Overall, the quality of the 2013 wines is superb. Whites full of flavour and complexity and reds with beautiful elegance and structure are to be expected.



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