

# THE GRAPESMITH MEDITERRANEO 2020



## **Wine of Origin Western Cape**

**Style of Wine:** Dry white blend.

**Grape varieties:** Roussanne 44% | Marsanne 35% | Grenache Blanc 11%  
Verdelho 6% | Bourboulenc 4%

**Barrels:** 10 Barrels

## **Background:**

Stellenbosch is situated close to the Atlantic and benefits from the cooling maritime effect breezing in from the ocean. The Western Cape around Cape Town and the southern tip of Africa is blessed with a Mediterranean climate with winter rainfall and long, moderately warm and dry summers. Ideal conditions for growing wine. The white grape varieties that have distinguished themselves in the south of France and Spain in a Mediterranean climate, have only recently started to gain popularity in the Cape. The Grapesmith Mediterraneo 2019 utilises these varieties and their wonderful affinity for Mediterranean conditions to create a first for the Cape.

The increased effects of global warming are becoming more and more visible and Mediterranean grape varieties have proven that they are perfectly adapted to warmer and drier conditions. This is evident in their drought resistance and also the retention of acidity and low pH during ripening.

## **Roussanne Winemaking**

Roussanne ripens very rapidly and requires meticulous monitoring to ensure harvest is done at optimal ripeness. Grapes were harvested at 23.1° balling on 27 February 2020 and showed beautiful flavour intensity and firm texture. Grapes were harvested from a vineyard located high up on the cool south-west facing slopes of Simonsberg, then cooled overnight in picking crates. The grapes were whole bunch pressed early the next morning with only the gentlest pressing to yield delicate juice with refined flavours. The wine was fermented naturally in older 225 and 400 litre French oak barrels. The wine spent a total of 11 months on the primary lees with occasional battonage to stir up the lees. No MLF was allowed and after a light filtration the blend was bottled in February 2021.

## **Marsanne Winemaking**

Harvested on 10 February 2020 at 23° balling from a cool site overlooking False Bay. The grapes were cooled down overnight to 5°Celsius. Grapes were whole bunch pressed early the next morning before cold settling and then transferred directly into 225 and 400 litre French oak barrels for a spontaneous fermentation, utilising the yeast strains naturally occurring on the berries. The wine was left in barrel with minimal interference, apart from stirring the lees and topping up when needed. No malolactic fermentation was done, in order to preserve the primary fresh fruit aromas.

## **Grenache Blanc Winemaking**

Harvested on 3 March 2020 at 21.2° Balling and crushed directly into the press and given skin contact for 3 hours. Thereafter, grapes were pressed directly to barrel and completed natural fermentation in 225 litre French oak barrels. The Grenache Blanc spent 11 months in barrel on primary lees before blending took place.

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## Verdelho Winemaking

Picked on 31 January 2020 on 22.3° Balling and fermented in barrel. This Verdelho was made from the oldest planting in South Africa (1996), when Frans Malan decided to plant 7 rows on Simonsig Estate. Originally from the Island of Madeira it is known to make vibrant, tangy and refreshingly dry white wines with lively acidity.

## Bourboulenc Winemaking

Bourboulenc is a late ripening cultivar with tight bunches and large grapes. Picked on 19 March 2020 on 19.5° Balling and allowed 6 hours skin contact before pressing. Natural fermentation was done in older 225L barrels resulting in very light component with slightly floral and mineral notes.

## The Blending

The blending process started by finding the sweet spot in the ratio between Roussanne and Marsanne, after which the crisp and zesty Grenache Blanc was added to contribute elements of citrus verbine and wet river stone minerals. The 6% of Verdelho seems relatively low but using more started to show dominance over the other components. While very subtle in flavour, the Bourboulenc contributed floral and mineral hints. Each component plays its part in this exciting blend, some contributing more towards flavour and others towards structure and freshness.

## Tasting Notes

This complex white blend displays a pale straw colour. An array of stone fruits and citrus blossoms fill the glass, followed by a distinct chalky minerality. On the palate, initial flavours of lemon tart and nectarine open over time revealing floral and savoury notes. Restrained on the palate with lovely tension and crispness that persists to the finish. Complex layered flavours with perfectly integrated oak complemented by subtle hints of oats and autolysed yeast add to the palate weight.

## Food Pairing

Crayfish, grilled fish. Poultry in rich creamy sauces. Blue cheese and goat's cheese. Foie gras. Also worth a try with spicy dishes and mild curries.

**Serving Advice:** Serve in large glasses and allow to breathe. Do not over-chill. 10 to 12°C.

## Analysis:

Alcohol:	13.1% by volume
Residual Sugar:	2 g/l
Total Acidity:	5.6 g/l
pH:	3.22



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