



IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

Circle of Life tells the story of Waterkloof: A once conventionally farmed vineyard with great potential, that - since Paul Boutinot took over the property - has been transformed into a living, breathing regenerative vineyard by Farm Manager Christiaan Loots and his team.

At Waterkloof we strive to produce balanced, characterful wines by adhering to traditional regenerative methods. Our soils are kept healthy by using plant extracts, fungi and bacteria from our own organic compost. We do not fight nature, we harness it.

Our focus has always been to get a better understanding of Waterkloof and the individual characters of its vineyard blocks. The Circumstance range allows these individual blocks and varieties to be expressed. Conversely, our objective with Circle of Life has been to produce two blends that encapsulate all the varying terroir characteristics and grape varieties found on Waterkloof-they are a true reflection of the totality, philosophy and specificity of Waterkloof.

A GENTLE HAND

We harvest according to taste and find it essential to spend most of our time in the vineyards to see how the flavours develop. Bunches are hand-picked early in the mornings, when they are still cool, which helps to preserve the flavours. To ensure that only the best berries are used, we sorted all grapes by hand in the winery as well. The whole bunches were placed into our wooden fermenters via our gravitational system. The fermentation started naturally with yeast present on the grapes to enhance the flavours prevailing in the vineyards. We also don't add any sulphur at this point. Just pure grapes in our wooden fermenters.

Throughout the fermentation process, we did soft punch downs twice a day to gently and slowly extract the tannins. The wines spent around 21-25 days on the skins, during which time the tannins were able to soften. This duration is dependent on taste.

After the maceration time on the skins, we ran the wine down via gravity – still no pumping. The grape skins also fell through into the basket press and were softly pressed to gently extract the last bit of wine, aroma and colour from the skins.

The varieties were aged separately in 600L French oak barrels. Only 5 % were new barrels, to avoid dominance of wood aromatics in our wines.

After 12 months in barrel, we blended the Mourvèdre (84%), Syrah (9%) and Grenache (7%) together and kept it for another 8 months in our wooden fermenters. This wine is unfiltered and gently filtered.

AND A FEW PRAYERS TO MOTHER NATURE – 2022/2023 GROWING SEASON

The 2022 Winter was slightly warmer than the previous years and we also saw less rainfall. Keeping all of this in mind our farm manager (Christiaan Loots) started to implement minimum tilling in the vineyard, packing more mulch in between the vines, adding biochar and experimenting with interesting cover crops.

All with the aim of improving the soil health by promoting more beneficial microbial growing conditions, retaining moisture, keeping the soil cooler and adding natural forms of nitrogen. In the last 3 years he has taken the percentage of carbon matter from 1% in some block to 4%.

With the slightly warmer Winter conditions we were surprised by an earlier budburst as well as flowering. We were lucky to not experience strong winds during the growing period which helped to have an even fruit set.

The growing season took an interesting turn during the second week of December with heavy rainfall. The team had to be on a close watch of the vineyard to make sure that we avoid any mildew.

Veraison was a week or so earlier and even due to the additional rainfall. We assumed that the harvest would then also start earlier but with the rest of the growing season being moderate to cool we only really got into the full swing of harvest from the second week of February.

The harvest was complicated a bit more with heavy rain falling toward the end of February. Luckily by this time we had already harvested all our white varieties and only had a few blocks of red left. We waited a week for the vineyard to utilize the excess water but it did help us to achieve good phenolic ripeness on the later red varieties. In the end a blessing from Mother nature!
Interesting enough we saw more bunches this year but smaller berries. The whites were up a little bit in

NADIA LANGENEGGER'S TASTING NOTE

I enjoy the different layers of this wine and how it continues to evolve in your glass as it opens up. On the nose I pick up a variety of different aromas ranging from earthy and flinty notes to red plums, to leafy herbs, black pepper as well as a savory note. On the palate the wine is very expressive and has silky tannins.

THE NUMBERS (8 500 BOTTLES PRODUCED)

Alc: 12.5 %

RS: 2

TA: 5.3 g/l

pH: 3.75

VA: 0.7