

THE SADIE FAMILY WINES PTY LTD.

P.O. BOX 1019, APRILSKLOOF ROAD, 7299, PAARDEBERG, MALMESBURY, SOUTH AFRICA

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EBEN'S IMPRESSIONS: THE 2016 SELECTION

SIGNATURES

Columella 2014

The 2014 Columella is a great follow-up on the 2013: the regional character of the Swartland married a sophisticated feel on the mouth. The 12 months in barrels with about 5 - 8% new wood, followed by 12 months of aging with no new wood in old, large format casks have placed the Columella in an environment where the wine is much more compact - and although it develops more slowly, it has a smooth mouthfeel. From 2010 harvest onwards the Columella wines need more time in their youth, or else decantation for at least 2 hours if opened prior to 5 years of age. The texture and mouthfeel are seamless.



New Palladius cellar

Palladius 2014

The Palladius 2014 is a transition wine for us, since this was the first vintage for which we used clay amphorae. The wine has truly grown into its own and will move up a notch over the next two years: the 2016 vintage will be aged in clay and concrete in the new aging cellar dedicated to this wine.

With Palladius our major goal is to try and get the maximum volume of compact fruit and texture together with the best potential volume of acidity and freshness.

Compared to many white wines, the Palladius is more phynolic and textured and best enjoyed with food. We always encourage people to take the wine to picnics... but then it also needs decantation in the first 5 years from bottling, so there has to be a decanter in the picnic basket!

This wine might be white in colour, but that is about the only characteristic that prevents the Palladius from being a red.

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OLD VINE SERIES

Skerpioen 2015

The 2015 has a beaming acidity and minerality that is such an ambassador for this wine from the dunes in the West Coast with its early morning fog and windswept plains in the afternoon. We are extremely proud of this bottling, because it is a clear reference to this terroir.

Skurfberg 2015

We managed to pick at a perfect time in 2015, for the minerality and feel of the wine and the fruit expression are possibly in the best equilibrium we have ever had in this wine. The acidity was great in 2015 and we have very high expectations for this wine in terms of its future aging potential. The wine is drinking very well now, but it will be a good decision and a compliment to the wine to put a couple of bottles away for the future.

Voetpad 2015

This vintage of 'T Voetpad has possibly had one of the most regular growing patterns and overall crop levels ever. We usually have to deal with very small berries - nearly too small - but this year the berry size and the crop were the best we have ever seen. At the pressing of the juice we already observed that the acidity was lifted and the overall extraction of the wines was much more harmonious. The amazing thing about 'T Voetpad is the fact that it is our most diverse co-planted vineyard with 5 varieties, but it is usually our most harmonious wine at bottling; something that is nearly impossible to comprehend. Our only explanation is that when vines grow together for more than a 100 years, they all become one "mind"!

Kokerboom 2015

This is the most difficult parcel of vines to capture with perfect ripeness in any year. The Semillon in the Clanwilliam region sometimes ripens with a 1% raise in alcohol per day! And at times the process is nearly stagnant and with no real pattern, but in 2015 the slower ripening allowed us to perfectly track the grape as was the case with the Skurfberg up in the region as well. It seems as if we managed to pick on the best possible morning of the year. This wine is as pure and well defined as we have ever seen it. We recently opened a 2009 and would like to suggest that this wine be cellared for quite a number of years.

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Mev. Kirsten 2015

We had our first “proper” crop ever of the vineyard in 2015 and having a bigger volume to ferment made a huge difference. After nearly a decade of farming this vineyard, it is finally responding and the vines which once were very abandoned are pretty much back in form. A number of plants have died, but we have replanted them and the young vines are doing well, although we will not include them in the wine for quite a number of years to come!

This vintage is more quiet and restrained than usual due to the lifted acidity and it is a wine that still has a little way to go before one can even think about opening it.

Soldaat 2015

If there is one wine that keeps us on our toes, it is this one. The light pigmentation of the berries, the big stalks and the slow annual fermentation make this one of the more difficult and challenging wines in the cellar. It is the most nerve-wrecking member in the collection of old vineyard wines, but therefore also the most rewarding.

The 2015 is elegant and complex; and is already showing very well. It has less acidity than the previous two bottlings and is more approachable as well. This wine has already opened up and is drinking beautifully, whereas many of the higher acidity wines require more time.

Pofadder 2015

In 2015 the Cinsault across the region had some sunburn, for a reason not completely clear to us, so we lost a big volume of the fruit on the sorting tables and ended up making much less than usual. The small volume we did end up bottling is one of our personal favourites though. It is slightly more concentrated than usual and the wine has greater depth and texture than in the past. After the intense sorting the wine ended up with a slightly bigger volume but with the same acidity as was the case in 2013 and 2014 and we are really looking forward to following the development of this wine in the bottle.

Treinspoor 2015

Again: we have a much smaller quantity of the Treinspoor this year. As mentioned before, this is (to our mind) the red grape that might well transport the Swartland Terroir best into liquid form, purely because it captures the soils and the earthiness of the place. We have come a long way since our first bottlings of Tinta Barocca and the current version is the most refined ever, but it has not lost the tannin and the structural feeling of the grape. The 2015 weighs in at a mere 12.8% alcohol, but is phenolically completely ripe and has an amazing mouth feel.

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Conclusion: This is one of our most compact releases thus far and the quality across the selection of bottling is at a place where we are very happy with our progress. The battle still is and will forever be to gain enough ripeness with acidity, because the acidity in our grapes has been taking a hammering with the current drought – and that after a succession of warm and dry years. The last of the big Swartland rains came down in 2004: more than a decade ago. Much needed water reserves are now necessary to improve the water management of our vines in future; and their ability to draw on resources.

This winter will see the first of our own plantings being done at the winery and the first vineyard planted is a co-plantation of different selections of Grenache, Carignan, Cinsault, Counoise, Terret Noir, Alicante Bouchet, Pontac and Tinta Barocca.

Enjoy the 2016 release!

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