

MEV. KIRSTEN

Eben Sadie has been working since 2006 with grapes off this decomposed granite vineyard at the foot of the Botmanskop mountain in Stellenbosch's Jonkershoek Valley – much of it planted in the 1920s. The mere one hectare of vines belonging to Mrs Kirsten and her family is recognised as the oldest chenin blanc in South Africa. The vineyard is slowly but surely dying, and continuing work is needed to prolong its life.

Because of the winemaker's greater experience with vinifying these grapes, more understanding of the vineyard has been gained – it is clear, for example, that the juice from its grapes is very prone to oxidation. The structural integrity of the wine, however, with its brilliant acidity, suggests that it is likely to age particularly well.

The Mev. Kirsten wine is vinified slightly differently from the other whites, with an initial carbonic maceration before and the fermentation to follow. Harvesting dates are now earlier, to retain even more of the vineyard's unique acidity – this has slightly reduced its oxidation potential and revealed more bright fruit, without losing structure and firmness.

This wine is very different from the chenin off Skurfberg – together they present a fine exposition of the many dimensions of this great variety.

Eben Sadie is al sedert die 2006-oesjaar werksaam met druiwe van hierdie wingerd wat in verweerde granietgronde aan die voet van Botmanskop in Stellenbosch se Jonkershoekvallei staan. Die wingerd (van bykans een hektaar) is in die 1920's aangeplant en behoort aan mev. Kirsten en haar familie. Dit word erken as Suid-Afrika se oudste chenin blanc-wingerd. Die blok is aan die afsterwe en daar word voortgeset gewerk om die wingerd se leeftyd te verleng.



Die afgelope jare se interaksie met die wingerd het al tot baie groter insig gelei en dit is duidelik dat die druiwe geneig is om 'n baie oksidatiewe sap voort te bring waarteen gewaak moet word. Die strukturele integriteit van die wyn is merkwaardig en die meegaande hoë natuurlike suurinhoud het daartoe gelei dat die Mev. Kirsten-wyn een van die wyne is met die hoogste denkbare verouderingspotensiaal.

Die druiwe word effens anders hanteer as gewoonlik, deurdat die korrels toegelaat word om met die gistingsproses te begin alvorens die sap uitgedruk word. Die volledige gistingsproses word dan in 'n stukvat voltooi. Die wingerd word tans vroeër gepars om meer van die natuurlike vaste suur te beskerm en sodoende die oksidasie-potensiaal van die wyn te stabiliseer vir 'n uiteindelijke varser en vrugtiger aanslag.

Hierdie wyn kontrasteer grootliks met dié van Skurfberg en dit opsigself dui op die merkwaardige diversiteit en karaktereenskappe van chenin blanc.