



Stark-Condé The Field Blend Jonkershoek Valley 2017



That old saying, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” is the inspiration when blending this wine. The idea is to find the perfect balance between the richness and texture of the Roussanne and Viognier and balance that with the bright fruit and acidity of the Chenin and Verdelho.

Varietal: 36% Chenin Blanc, 36% Roussanne, 17% Viognier, 11% Verdelho
Rootstock: Richter 110
Fruit source: from our own Oude Nektar farm in Jonkershoek Valley
Yield: 7.0 tons/hectare
°B at harvest: 21.5-22.5°
Alcohol: 13.5%
Total Acid: 6.3
Residual sugar: 2.6 g/l
Age of vines: 9 years
Trellis: 5-wire vsp
Irrigation: drip irrigation
Vineyard elevation: 200m

Winemaker's comment:
The 2017 was the third consecutive year of serious drought in the Cape winelands. Yet, we didn't have any drastic heat spikes during the harvest period and the vines showed little stress despite the severe dry conditions. The overall fruit quality was excellent. This vintage continues from last year with Chenin being dominant in the blend. Almost entirely barrel fermented, but with a touch of an “egg” fermented component adding body. We handled it as carefully and as naturally as possible, giving the wine only a light fining and bottling with minimal filtration. This is our sixth vintage of this wine and it is interesting to see the consistency of the vineyard. Stylistically, I have always been looking for a balance between the richness and perfume of the roussanne and viognier and the fruit and freshness of the chenin and verdelho.

Total production: 8052 bottles

The historical name for this vineyard is Jan Lui's Field, named for an early owner of the farm. This site was originally used by the khoi-san for grazing livestock and it is believed to be one of the oldest cultivated fields in Stellenbosch. Grapes have been grown on this site for more than 350 years.

Details of vinification and oaking:
We have one block on the farm — the bottom vineyard, just as you drive into our gate — that is quite different than all the other blocks. Because it sits at a bottom of a steep slope as well as being very close to the river, it has a number of different geological influences: there are 11 different soil types in this 2-hectare block! Faced with this difficult situation, we tried to turn it into a positive and decided to plant a mix of varieties that could be picked together to make up one wine. In 2017, the grapes were picked in multiple passes and pressed separately. Approximately 50% was then blended and fermented together. The wine was 90% barrel fermented in neutral oak — just a small percent ($\pm 5\%$) of new oak was used — and the balance fermented in concrete egg. It was aged for 8 months in barrel and tank with regular lees stirring.