

ANWILKA

STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA - ANWILKA

Winter 2014 started and finished earlier than usual, leading to even budburst. Spring was cooler overall and brought about good conditions for berry set, bar some wind, this led to looser bunches which is good for quality but also meant a smaller than usual crop.

Summer was moderate with constant wind and dry conditions, this was excellent to keep the vines and grapes healthy and disease free. The rainfall in summer was minimal. These dry conditions meant meticulous irrigation management was instrumental for maintaining quality until harvest time. We were blessed with minimal heat waves throughout the harvest. All of these factors mentioned meant a very early start to harvest, about 2-3 weeks earlier than usual.

This vintage also saw the move to produce the Klein Constantia KC Red at Anwilka in brand new stainless steel tanks. There was also a cooling and effluent system upgrade in the cellar, much needed for the extra capacity to be handled. These exciting upgrades were all finished in time, despite the early start in harvest, so we were 110% ready once picking started.

We started picking on 23 February with Shiraz coming in first, finishing off with Petit Verdot on 31st March. Grapes were exceptionally healthy due to the dry conditions. By selecting only the best and picking vineyards up to 3 times, it makes the winemaking process less invasive. Smaller yields meant flavours were concentrated. Healthy grapes meant fantastic juice analyses throughout the harvest. Shiraz gave us complex fruit flavours, small berry Cabernet Sauvignon gave palate concentration and Petit Verdot the finishing perfume and density. Dry conditions meant overall concentrated flavours and silky elegant tannins.

From 2015 we can expect more focus and a serious vein to Anwilka. Currently, it looks similar to the 2009 vintage but with more depth. The perfume on the nose is something to behold and seams effortlessly into the grainy but fine tannins on the palate. This vintage will probably need a little more Oak and perhaps slightly longer time in barrel, however this is something we will continue to evaluate throughout maturation. Petit Frère, is already showing the classic Shiraz spice, dark round fruit and grippy palate, but still being accessible from an early stage.

All in all, it was a very short and intense harvest, at times a bit frantic as we had to get everything in all at once. This meant that we picked every single day and weekends were left for pressing to have space for the next week's grapes to come in. Harvest came to an almost abrupt end on the 31st of March, 2 to 3 weeks earlier than usual. The overall health and condition of the grapes was something that stood out from other harvests.

