



SNAKES & LADDERS SAUVIGNON BLANC

TASTING NOTES

Snakes and Ladders' name takes its inspiration from the wild nature of these elevated bushvine vineyards high up in the West Coast Mountains, along with the highs and lows of farming these incredible parcels in such a challenging climate. It is this heat and water scarcity that keeps the roots of these vines searching for every ounce of nutrients they can extract from their deep red soils.

The wine that comes from these pristine grapes is deeply complex and we vinify it as simply as we can from whole bunch pressing the grapes to months of cool maturation in old oak barrels. On the nose there are aromas of wild grass with honey melon and warm citrus. The palate shows a voluptuous structure with notes of lime leaf, bergamot and dried pear all underpinned with a finely structured acidity.

SNAKES & LADDERS NUTS & BOLTS

Sauvignon blanc – Citrusdal Mountain
27 year old vineyard on red sand over clay



Wine of Origin
Citrusdal Mountain
Vintage 2019

Alcohol – 13.76%
Residual sugar – 1.40 g/L
Total acidity – 6.2 g/L
pH 3.25

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ABOUT THE WINE

The 2019 vintage saw little respite from the drought which has gripped the Western Cape over the last few years. Rainfall is limited in the Skurfborg, even in the best of years, though in the case of the Sauvignon blanc this provides a good counterpoint to the vine's natural vigour. I was quite simply blown away by the quality of the fruit this year, with bags of flavour, ripping acids and endless concentration.

Our key focus during harvest is picking times. If we can pick grapes at the right time, we can achieve tension and ripeness in the wine without the need to manipulate and “dress-up” the wines.

It's a big commitment to jump in the truck at midnight and head up the West Coast to arrive at 05h30 in the morning ahead of the pickers, but I think that seeing the wines in barrel and now in bottle, it is a worthwhile sacrifice. The vineyard was brought to us by a close friend who works with Chenin in the area. My natural inclination was to have little interest in working with Sauvignon blanc, but seeing the vineyard and the soils, I felt compelled to work with it. Working with the fruit in the 2019 harvest was an absolute pleasure and I'm delighted to see the kind of complexity and texture that Sauvignon blanc can deliver on the right sites.

We have stuck to our winemaking basics here, eschewing primary fruit in favour of the deeper characteristics of the wines. The grapes are whole-bunch pressed in our old Vaslin press with no SO₂ and no other additions. The juice is then wild-fermented in mix of 225 and 600 litre old oak barrels where the wines remain on their gross lees for 9-10 months before blending and bottling. We favour malolactic fermentation over early additions of sulphur dioxide, and the wines only see a first addition of SO₂ in the early winter. We are looking for wines that show tension without losing their suppleness and core, and wines that will reward time in the cellar.

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