

Crystallum, `Clay Shales` Hemel-en-Aarde Chardonnay 2019

Walker Bay, Hemel-en Aarde, Cape South Coast, South Africa



PRODUCER

This small winery was established in 2007 by brothers Peter-Allan and Andrew Finlayson. Their father, Peter, was a pioneer in the production of cool climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir at Bouchard Finlayson, so after university it seemed the natural thing for the boys to return home and source some fruit from the Hemel-en-Aarde valley to start their own label. Crystallum is now one of the most highly regarded wineries in South Africa, yet the Finlaysons are determined to make even better wines. Peter-Allan has sourced fruit from some new vineyards, while winemaking has evolved. All of the wines are now fermented using indigenous yeasts and new oak has been reduced to help the bright fruit shine through.

VINEYARDS

This Chardonnay is grown in the 'Clay Shales' single vineyard, the name of which is derived from the soil composition here: predominately clay and shale. This combination allows for optimum fruit development while naturally restricting vigour. The vineyard sits at 300 metres above sea level in the mountains behind the town of Hermanus in the Walker Bay region. Altitude and cooling sea breezes slow down the grape ripening process, resulting in grapes with excellent concentration of flavour balanced by a vibrant acidity.

VINTAGE

2019 was a much cooler vintage than 2018. Winter saw a fair amount of rainfall, which replenished water reserves in the soil and sustained the vines through the growing season. Unsettled weather and irregular temperatures during flowering resulted in a reduction in yield. The cooler than usual temperatures during the summer meant that the grapes underwent a perfectly paced slow and steady ripening and were harvested in excellent condition.

VINIFICATION

Upon arrival at the winery, the grapes were pressed as whole bunches in order to obtain a very clear juice. The juice was left to settle and then racked into French oak barrels. The wine fermented naturally in barrel and remained on its lees for 10 months, gaining textural complexity. It was bottled by hand with no filtration or cold stabilisation to retain maximum intensity of flavour and character.

TASTING NOTES

Classic flint on the nose with candied lemon, ripe peach and honeysuckle flavours on the palate with hints of honey. A saline minerality and succulent, juicy texture add to the complexity of this intense and long lasting wine.

Grape Varieties	100% Chardonnay
Winemaker	Peter-Allan Finlayson
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	13.5%
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan