

**Rocking Horse 2015
Cape White Blend
WO Western Cape**

Tasting Notes

Rocking Horse is our cornerstone wine and takes its name from a wooden rocking horse that we made for our daughters out of old oak barrel staves.

The wine is composed from a number of carefully selected vineyard sites in the Western Cape. The aromas are of lime leaf, white peach, exotic woods, and rosemary. In the mouth, the wine starts broad and rich, resolving into a keen line of acidity supported by a gentle tannin.

Rocking Horse 2015 - Nuts and bolts

Roussanne - 33% Voor Paardeberg - 10 years old clay/decomposed granite
Semillon blanc - 23% Franschoek - 32 years old on alluvial soils
Chardonnay - 20% Overberg 24 & 4 years old - clay/shale soils
Chenin blanc - 18% Bottelary 35 years old and Swartland 32 years old - granite soils
Clairette blanche - 6% Stellenbosch 32 years old - decomposed granite soil

Alcohol - 13.6%; Residual sugar - 2.1 g/L; Total acidity - 5.5 g/L; pH 3.38

About the wine and the 2015 vintage

Rocking Horse is our cornerstone wine, and we have put an enormous amount of work into sourcing intriguing heritage vineyards that form the backbone of this wine. During the 2015 vintage our increasing experience with our vineyards were coupled with fantastic growing conditions that delivered a wonderfully healthy and concentrated crop.

Our vineyard selection supports our vision to deliver a blended Cape White wine of depth, texture and subtlety. In sourcing Roussanne, Chardonnay, Semillon, Clairette blanche and Chenin blanc, we are looking for both heritage and young vineyards which all bring their own unique elements and ability to 'speak' about the place in which they are grown.

The winemaking remains simple. Our primary challenge during the harvest is to ensure that we pick all of our far-flung blocks at the right time and get them back to the winery in perfect condition. Once this is achieved, we revert to working with very little in the way of 'winemaking technique'.

Picking is done early and based mostly on taste with an eye on the style of the wine that I'm aiming at. I am not looking for a big alcohol expression (nor a low alcohol one for that matter) and prefer subtle wines that show ripeness, while being

restrained and elegant.

The grapes are whole bunch pressed and no treatments or additions are used on the juice. This hands-off regime on the juice really helps to develop the character of the wine.

The juice is then racked off the heavy solids and taken to old oak barrels of various volumes, from the smaller 228L burgundian pieces to the larger 600L barrels. I don't have any new oak barrels in the cellar and most of the barrels range from 4-8 years old when I start using them. The wines are fermented naturally, and they are allowed to then go through their subsequent malolactic fermentation to further soften the wines. I watch them carefully for the next few months until they 'settle down', at which point I add a bit of sulphur dioxide to slow down the development during barrel ageing. Primary fruit is not what we are looking for here, rather we're trying to show the underlying character of the grapes and the vineyard where they came from.

In the case of the Clairette blanche, we ferment part of the batch on skins, much like a red wine. The grapes are destemmed into an open vat where they are allowed to ferment naturally. Daily punchdowns help with a gentle extraction of tannin and flavour from the Clairette. The wine is pressed off the skins before dryness and taken to old oak barrels for the rest of the year.