



Southend's vineyards lie in the shadow of the Babylonstoring Mountains in the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley and is owned and farmed by our neighbours, the Pringle family. It is a notably cooler slope, a stone's throw across the river from us, with less sun exposure and consequently slower ripening. It produces wines with sparkling clarity, high-toned fruit flavours, compact structure, and vibrant acidity. We preserve these features by fermenting in larger format casks that often ferment slowly into the winter and finish in the spring. This parcel takes a steely and light-footed point of difference from the other Chardonnay vineyards of our appellation.

#### **TASTING NOTES**

A wine with energy and intensity. The high-toned, rapier-like lime fruit is buoyed with sharp ginger, white pepper and flint. Crushed stones and saltiness sustain the refreshing appeal. Good weight of flavour in the mid palate boosted with bright acidity and grippy texture.

<b>ANALYSIS</b>	Alcohol by volume	13.4%
	Total Acidity	6.9 g/l
	pH	3.37
	Residual sugar	2.5 g/l

#### **LOCATION & CLIMATE**

These vineyards lie on the south-facing slope at altitudes of 300m down to 210m, in the porphyritic Granite soils of the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley. This appellation ranges from 4 to 8 km in proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. The climate is cool and temperate, where parallel mountain ranges channel the southerly oceangoing winds through the appellation during the summer. These southerly winds in turn create regular sea mists and overcast conditions, moderating the temperatures in the valley. The annual rainfall is 850mm, with 50% falling in the winter months (May – August).

**APPELLATION** Wine of Origin UPPER HEMEL-EN-AARDE VALLEY

**SOIL** Well-drained decomposed granite with heavier, clay-rich subsoil.

**ASPECT** South West facing. Slope of 16%.

**TRELISSING** 7-wire Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP) with movable wires

**AGE OF VINES** 19 years

**PRUNING** Cordon

**VINES PER Ha** 3 2 0 0

**AVERAGE YIELD** 5.8 tons/Ha (39 hl/Ha)

## 2023 VINTAGE

### *Growing Season & Harvesting*

The growing season was preceded by a fairly marginal Winter for vine dormancy. June saw some good rainfall throughout, followed by drier and mild periods in July that presumably caused some uneven budding in the Chardonnay. A colder August retained the dormancy in the vineyards to a timely budbreak in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September. A drier, windy and quite cool Spring resulted in slow growth in the vine canopy until December when some heat and good rains brought a late flush of vegetal growth. A dry and warm January hastened veraison with conditions looking idyllic, until the first rains arrived in early February as the first grapes arrived. Intermittent rain continued throughout February and March with rain every other day, making it exceedingly difficult to pick grapes and botrytis rot remained a constant threat. Had it not been for the favourable weather in January to bring the grapes and tannins to ripeness, the vintage could have been much worse.

These **Chardonnay** vineyards were harvested from **24<sup>th</sup> February** to **8<sup>th</sup> March**.

### WEATHER DATA RESPECTIVE TO VINTAGE SEASONS

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>DORMANCY / WINTER (June - August)</b>					
Rain (mm)	325	202	348	277	235
Average Temperature (°C)	14,5	13,6	13,5	13,2	13,7
Accumulated Chilling Portions (Dynamic Model)	22	28	33	45	35
<b>VEGETATIVE GROWTH (September - December)</b>					
Rain (mm)	160	233	200	197	152
Average Temperature (°C)	17,1	16,8	15,9	15,7	16,6
Growing Degree Days units (°C)	915	884	790	765	874
<b>RIPENING (January - February)</b>					
Rain (mm)	150	99	46	20	92
Average Temperature (°C)	19,4	20	19,8	20,6	19,9
Total hours over 30°C	22	26	12	57	27
Growing Degree Days (°C)	617	637	614	663	616

### *Winemaking*

The grapes are handpicked and packed in to small, shallow crates to limit crushing of the bunches. The day's harvest is cooled down overnight to 8°C in the winery's refrigerated cold room. The grape bunches are hand-sorted on a conveyor table and fall directly to the press for whole bunch pressing. The best quality juice (approximately 40% of the press yield) is drained directly to barrel, with the balance settled by temperature only (no enzyme used) and racked the next day to barrel for spontaneous fermentation. No sulphur is used in the winemaking until preparations for bottling, allowing diverse micro-organisms from the grape itself to flourish unrestrained in the fermentation.

### *Maturation & Bottling*

**New oak** comprises **12%** of the final blend. Matured for 11 months in mostly puncheon (500L) and some barrique (228L) barrels produced in Burgundy. Tighter grained oak is preferred for subtle flavour, with longer seasoning and slower, lower temperature toasting. The wine was blended and kept for further élevage of 5 months in stainless steel. No fining, coarse filtration and sulphur adjustment before bottling.

**BOTTLES PRODUCED** 22 850 x 750ml

**BOTTLING DATE** 10 May 2024

**CELLAR DOOR PRICE** R 265.00

**BEST DRINKING** Now – 8 years