



Mother Rock 'Force Celeste' Chenin Blanc

Swartland – South Africa 2017

Johan Meyer, AKA “Stompie”, has made a name for himself in the ever-emerging South African wine industry in a very short time. While his namesake ‘Signature’ wines reflect his love of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, Stompie is not one to limit himself and thus created the Mother Rock Wines in collaboration with his UK importer Ben Henshaw of Indigo Wines.

After seeing market quickly drink up the initial Force Majeure (Celeste in the U.S.) wines, they expanded the offerings to include a label called ‘Mother Rock,’ focused on discovering exceptional parcels of sustainably-farmed vines grown on a variety of soil types. The identity of these two ‘brands’ is rooted deep in the South African wine industry with Chenin Blanc at the root of the whites and field blends of the reds. These are terroir-focused wines made to offer drinkability and enjoyment, and it doesn’t hurt that the labels are beautiful.

Much like the ‘Signature’ wines, he has long-term contracts with some of the best growers in the Southern Cape determined to farm their sites organically. In the winery there is no SO₂ added before or during fermentation but it’s a natural element that comes from the vines and you will always end up with some SO₂ in the wines. That being said the wines are lightly sulfured before bottling for preservation and stability. Ultimately ‘Mother Rock’ is about showcasing the best and purest expression of South Africa’s diverse terroir.

All the grapes are grown from one single vineyard near Paardeberg Mountain on decomposed granite. The bush vines were planted in 1983 and dry farmed since its initial planting. Since 2014, the southwest facing vineyard has only received organic sprays and the undervine work has been done purely by machine and not chemically.

The grapes were hand-harvested into small lug-boxes, limiting the damage to the grape in larger bins. They were harvested at different sugar levels to insure good pH and acid from the early picking with powerful structure and aromas from riper batches. 90% of the grapes were fermented in stainless steel at cooler temperature (57°F) while the rest was fermented in older 300L barrels. 20% of the lot was whole bunch fermented on skins for 4 weeks in open top barriques. After nine months on the gross lees, the wine was blended and bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

Composition

100% Chenin Blanc

Soil Type

Decomposed Granitic Sand over Granite

Vine Age

35 years old

Élevage

9 months in Steel (80%) & Old Wood (10%)

Yields

2 tons per acre

Production

1,150 cases

Tasting Notes

“ Zesty, with white stones and white stone fruits, some herbal hints too – a bit funk but a whole lot of fun. A thirst quenching apéritif, light and energetic – yet a powerful, intensity of fruit and minerality abounds. It will be interesting to see this wine uncoil over the next 2-3 years. ”

Reviews

None