

Pilgrim Wines Bastardo do Castello 2020

Origin:

Bastardo do Castello (as registered by SAWIS in SA) also better known as Trousseau, originated in the Jura region, southeast France. It is a vigorous red wine variety planted in well exposed terroirs and well drained soils. It is a hardy grape and also thrives in drier climates. The bunches are small and the berries medium sized.

The wines produced are characteristic, warm and full-bodied with a pretty bright, ruby colour. Typical of Trousseaus are peppery, violet notes with hints of cherry fruit and a sharpness to the acidity described as minerality.

Barrel maturation typically occurs with less than 10% new oak, for up to 3 years.

Terroir & Site:

Perched on top of a North Eastern sloping hill, nestled between other isolated patches of hard to find vines, these vines enjoy prime views over Stellenbosch and its rolling hills toward Cape Town.

Manicured, and especially nurtured and kept isolated so as to keep safe from encroaching leaf roll virus off of neighboring farmlands, these vines produce amazing fruit. On the slopes of Stellenbosch Mountain – a landmark that epitomizes quality – its roots run deep into the decomposed red/brown granitic soils of origin. Only 66 vines have been found in Stellenbosch – and in this bottle is the wine that flows from them.

Harvest Conditions:

2020 was in all aspects a very cool vintage, with slightly smaller crops. The growing season was quite windy, leading to smaller bunches and less dense canopies. Harvest itself was altogether early and can be characterized by 2 distinct periods – before the rain and after the rain! There was quite a heavy downpour in late February, early March which made deciding to pick quite difficult. You would have been lucky to have all your berries in before the deluge, as after it took a bit for the vines to achieve the same concentration in ripening. Harvesting of the Bastardo commenced on the 17th of February 2020.



Vinification method:

66 Vines don't yield a lot of fruit, so this vintage was fermented in a plastic bin. No tech was used in sorting, crushing, pumping or conveying of the fruit to the bin. Instead, the grapes were dropped into the bin as whole bunches and I got Christian and Jani to do a nice relaxing foot stomp. The addition of a bit of SO₂ is always needed.

Natural fermentation was quick and punch downs were the order of the day. This lasted for about a week. The wine was pressed quite quickly after fermentation and put into one small barrel.

Over the next 14 months maturation, we racked the wine from barrel to barrel to improve the natural mechanical sedimentation and cleaning process. This wine never saw a filter in its life.

Please be aware that this wine is made in the most unobtrusive way I could imagine to do. There will be some degree of sediment or crystal formation which is totally natural in these styles of wines.

Winemaker's Notes:

Color: Bright ruby red. Translucent and not very deep, but sparkingly inviting.

Nose: Starts off quite subdued at first, with whiffs of lavender and fresh tilled earth, but opens up to sweet raspberry and sour cherry, baked rhubarb and chamomile. Again there is a mysterious element of a new variety, which I can't always pinpoint, but is very familiar, almost like a memory that doesn't quite want you to grasp it.

Palate: Hits of bramble berry, raspberry strawberry, sweetly sublime with red cherry tartness. Weight if finely attuned to the lighter structure, very well in sync with what the lighter grip can offer. Mouth filling it surely is, with lots to offer and very appealing.

Analysis:

Alc: 13.0%

pH: 3.47

TA: 5.2 g/l

VA: 0.61 g/l

RS: 2.90 g/l