



Sauvignon Gris

2026

TERROIR & SITE

The 2026 Sauvignon Gris brings together two small parcels: one in Stellenbosch and one in the Swartland. The combination moves this second release from a single-area study into a Wine of Origin Coastal Region expression, allowing the same rare cultivar to show two complementary sides. The Stellenbosch parcel contributes fine herbal detail, freshness and line, while the warmer, drier Swartland parcel lends breadth, weight and a more generous texture. Sauvignon Gris remains exceptionally scarce in South Africa, and this tiny bottling continues Pilgrim's exploration of its local potential.

HARVEST CONDITIONS

The 2026 season began with good winter chill and a warm, dry spring that encouraged early, even growth. In Stellenbosch, dry conditions from August accelerated canopy and fruit development; January and February were more moderate, and many early white cultivars reached maturity ahead of normal timing. Early Sauvignon Blanc vineyards produced particularly healthy fruit, while improved bunch numbers and smaller berries gave both concentration and substance.

The Swartland received only about 60-70% of its usual winter rainfall, followed by dry, warm conditions and strong early fertility. January and February brought fewer hours above 35 °C than usual, helping the early white varieties retain poise, while low disease pressure supported clean fruit. Smaller berries were offset by higher bunch numbers; natural acidity was slightly lower, with Chenin Blanc and the region's other early whites showing very promising quality. In the finished Sauvignon Gris, the season presents as more aromatically reserved than 2025, but with markedly greater breadth and palate weight.

VINIFICATION METHOD

The two parcels were handled simply. After de-stemming, the grapes remained on their skins for approximately three days in a cool pre-fermentation maceration. Natural fermentation then began on the skins and continued for one further day before the grapes were pressed.

The fermenting juice was transferred to a single older, neutral 500 L French oak barrel, where fermentation was completed naturally. The neutral vessel served as a quiet fermentation and maturation environment, building texture without imposing overt oak character. The wine was bottled in July 2026.

TASTING NOTES

COLOUR Pale straw-gold with a delicate green tinge, reflecting the short skin contact and restrained extraction.

NOSE More reserved than the bright, immediately expressive 2025. With air it opens to fine fynbos, lemon verbena and soft leafy notes, followed by sweetly scented white peach, ripe pear and melon. The greener register is poised and savoury rather than overtly vegetal, giving the wine quiet aromatic complexity.

PALATE This is where the vintage declares itself. Broad, full and voluptuous, with a seductively rounded texture and generous mid-palate weight. Ripe yellow fruit and subtle tropical richness are held by gentle phenolic grip, herbal freshness and a clean line of acidity. The finish is long, layered and quietly powerful.

OVERALL A less extroverted but more textural expression than 2025: a wine whose restrained nose gives way to striking fullness and presence. The meeting of Stellenbosch and Swartland fruit produces a beautifully composed, tactile Sauvignon Gris with depth, savoury detail and real palate length.

ANALYSIS

ALCOHOL	13.19 % Vol.	PH	3.52
TOTAL ACIDITY	6.2 g/L	RESIDUAL SUGAR	2.4 g/l

BOTTLED July 2026 · PRODUCTION One 500 L barrel · Wine of Origin: Coastal Region