

2016 Kershaw Elgin Syrah

RANGE: Clonal Selection

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Syrah made up of clones SH9c, SH22 & SH99.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Elgin, Western Cape, South Africa

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 10.4 tons selected from 5 small parcels of Syrah.

HISTORY: In 2012, owner Richard Kershaw MW established Richard Kershaw Wines to create clonally selected, site-specific, cool climate wine paradigms from apposite noble grapes i.e. ones with the ability to produce world-class examples. SA's coolest wine district, Elgin Valley, reflected these principles benefitting from higher altitude, ocean proximity, specific cloud cover sequencing, high cold units and a large diurnal range, enabling the germane grapes, Chardonnay and Syrah and more recently Pinot Noir, to show a sense of place.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 17th – 23rd March 2016

Harvest Brix: 21.8 – 23.5

SEASON: In 2016, the preceding winter was fairly dry but cold units were exceptional (1200) with plenty of frosty mornings, allowing the vines to go into a proper dormancy. Rain did finally fall in August and September but as October began, the effect of the El Niño phenomenon (or ENSO episode) started to take effect. October was unusually warm accelerating budbreak and flowering. The fluctuating warm and cool days meant flowering was uneven, giving rise to smaller potential bunch sizes. After a cooler November, December was warm, sunny and dry enabling potential diseases to be kept at bay. A hot and dry January, meant acidity retention by the vine was challenging but after a warm start to February, the weather finally became cooler - and night time temperatures also dipped more so than average - providing the vine with some respite after a particularly torrid summer. The drier conditions meant that disease pressure was minimal, and a healthy crop was picked between the middle and end of March. The thicker skins held plenty of anthocyanins but meant it was crucial to avoid over extraction. Thus, gentler punch-downs were employed, and post fermentation maceration was shorter with the press fraction matured separately from the free run juice. This resulted in deeper colours with supple, pliant tannins; although acidities were softer than average, fruit concentration was high, and the wines have a lifted black fruit flavour profile.

WINEMAKING: The grapes were handpicked under autumnal skies into small lug baskets and then manually sorted on a conveyor before the stems were removed. The destemmed berries fell onto a vibrating table in order to remove jacks and substandard berries before dropping uncrushed into a small 500kg conical hopper and forklifted into open-topped fermenters. The grapes underwent a 3-day maceration before spontaneous fermentation began. A gentle pigeage program was charted and the grapes remained on skins for 17-21 days. The wine was then racked to barrel under gravity and the remaining pomace basket-pressed. Malolactic then proceeded in barrel followed by a light sulphuring and 17-month maturation. No finings were necessary and the wine was simply racked and bottled unfiltered.

BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected from Burgundy and Rhone, with only French oak chosen. 46% of the oak was new with the remainder split into 2nd and 3rd fill barrels of which 11 were 500L puncheons and the remainder 228L pièces.

ALCOHOL: 14.00%. For more information see extended technical sheet available on www.richardkershawwines.co.za

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 9300 bottles all individually marked on the label.

TASTING PROFILE: Subtle, precise style built on fine tannins that educe harmony, freshness with flavours of black skinned fruit, iodine and ground white peppercorns.



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