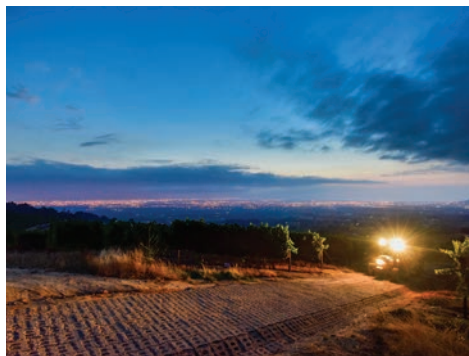


*Vin de Constance*  
2013



**KLEIN  
CONSTANTIA**  
— 1685 —

# Vin de Constance 2013



Harvest 2013 started later than usual. The preceding winter and spring conditions were very cool, delaying budburst by up to 2 weeks. The ripening period was characterised by moderate daytime temperatures and cool nights. Coupled with dry summer conditions, all was optimal for flavour development and raising of the Muscat de Frontignou.



The essence of Vin de Constance is perfect balance between sugar, acid and alcohol while retaining freshness and expressing our cool climate location and very specific soil types. As such everything we do, from vineyard to bottle is done with this in mind. It is also our philosophy to continually improve what we do and to this end we are doing research and making prudent adjustments in practices annually, aiming to do better with each vintage.



2013 was my second year as winemaker and my 5th year working with this wine. I had a far greater understanding of making Vin de Constance, but I also a greater understanding of what could go wrong. I am pleased to report that we were able to put together some amazing components and craft a blend which epitomises what we have been trying to achieve over the past few years.

In 2010 we moved away from conventional farming methods and moved towards a more sustainable and natural approach. As a result the vines were under a lot of stress and crop levels dropped substantially in these years. 2010 was subsequently not released due to it not living up to the high standards required for Vin de Constance. The vines then slowly started to recover. 2011 and 2012 were particularly small vintages, but 2013 has delivered more and is an indication that the vineyard has recovered

and is back in balance and symbiosis with the environment.

In 2013 Bruno Prats and Hubert de Bouard became shareholders of Klein Constantia, bringing with them a wealth of experience and knowledge. They were particularly involved in facilitating the blending of various components of Vin de Constance, introducing new methodology which have now become a standard part of our process

Since being re-introduced in 1986, after having been dormant for almost 100 years, Vin de Constance has appeared quickly on many lists as one of the world's greatest wines. It is internationally recognised for its historical importance, origin, quality and unique style. In order to continue this iconic wine's legacy and be around for another 330 years we certainly do not want to alter this successful and unique wine style. However, it is important and our duty to always seek for small but balanced improvements in areas that can elevate the quality further of this wine.

Here are some more indications of what we are currently undertaking:

- We are a step closer to isolating our own unique Muscat de Frontignou clone from the original Vin de Constance block. We have identified vines of superior qualities and are propagating them with the help of the University of Stellenbosch. In the next 5 years, we will be able to use our own clone in our new plantings.





- A great deal of effort has gone into restoring the natural balance of the soils and vines. We have dramatically reduced our use of sprays and increased the amount of organic nutrients in the soil. By doing so, we can restore homeostasis in the soil and create an environment that is sustainable with a holistic approach leaning towards bio-dynamics and thus improve the quality of our soils and fruit produced. As a WWF Conservation Champion our vision is aligned with that of the World Wildlife Fund, as we aim to unite conservation and agricultural development in a complementary, mutually beneficial manner.
- Grapes are harvested at 4am to ensure conditions are perfect and the grapes come in at coolest natural temperature.
- Another project in conjunction with the University of Stellenbosch we are pursuing is the isolation of a unique strain of yeast from the original Vin de Constance block. At the moment, we have a few strains that show great potential. Our next step is to find out which will be best suited to the strenuous fermentation conditions necessary in order to make Vin de Constance.
- Due to the success of the bush vines in the 2011 vintage, more bushvines have been planted and all new plantings are now configured in the same way. The success of this block is due to the shape of the vine that allows maximum sunlight exposure to the bunch, resulting in a higher degree of early raisining that in turn improves the balance of 'sugar to acid' ratios at harvest.
- We are constantly evaluating our coopers and barrels, looking to improving all aspects of this delicate but important process of Vin De Constance upbringing. At the moment we make use of a combination of French oak, Hungarian oak and Acacia, 60% of which are new barrels. We make use of tight grain as well as thicker and wider staves in order to minimise the effect of oxygen during aging.
- Blending is one of the most important factors when trying to achieve a perfect balance in the wine. A select panel of tasters from South Africa and France attend multiple tasting sessions over a 6 month period, constantly fine tuning the perfect blend before the final decision is made and then bottled.

Matthew Day, winemaker of Klein Constantia



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In order to create the perfect blend, a variety of techniques are utilized to optimally produce each component. Throughout the season we harvest in batches, from the riper berries that have great acidity to the raisins for sugar concentration. These batches form the perfect ratio between sugar, alcohol and acidity which allows the wine to stop fermentation naturally and without intervention. This wine is the culmination of great attention to detail, from bunch and berry sorting to barrel aging and cellaring.

Bright and gold in appearance with aromas of citrus marmalade and frangi pani abundant on the nose. The palate is full bodied and complex. A good sugar to fruit ratio combined with a great acidity ensures the wine is in balance. The wine concludes with a long, spicy and grippy finish.

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Vintage	2013
Varietal	Muscat de Frontignon
Alcohol	13.7%
Residual sugar	172g/l
PH	3.7
Total Acid	6.6g/l
Region	Constantia, Western Cape

