

THEUNISKRAAL

THEUNISKRAAL PRESTIGE 2010

Winemaker: Andries Jordaan

Appellation: Tulbagh

Grape varieties: Ruby Cabernet (50%), Cabernet Sauvignon (25%) and Shiraz (25%)

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Background

In the early 1700's, Theunis Bevernagie settled in a fertile valley guarded by the towering Witzenberg and Winterhoek mountains, and fed by the Klein Berg River. His name was to be enshrined in local wine lore for in 1927 Theuniskraal was bought by the Jordaan family, specifically for winemaking. In 1948, Andries Jordaan launched the estate's first Riesling – and a South African icon was born. Just two years later Theuniskraal Riesling took gold at the Commonwealth Wine Show against international competition.

Andries' sons, Kobus and Rennie continued the tradition of fine Riesling, extending plantings with other classic varieties, both white and red. Today their sons Andries and Wagner carry on the family's hands-on quality approach to winemaking.

Vineyards (viticulturists: Wagner and Andries Jordaan)

Theuniskraal comprises 350ha with 140ha under vine, mostly Cape Riesling, Chardonnay and Sauvignon blanc. The soils are predominantly gravel and sandy loam.

The Ruby Cabernet grapes, which dominate the blend, were grown in south-facing, trellised and irrigated vineyards at an altitude of 240m above sea level. All the vines, planted in 1999, are cultivated in loamy clay soils, which keep the roots cool in the summer months and preserve the varietal flavours.

The south-facing Cabernet Sauvignon vineyards are also planted at an altitude of 240m above sea level, in stony, loamy as well as deeper loamy soils. The trellised vines, established in 1998, receive supplementary, drip irrigation.

The Shiraz, planted in 2000, is clone 22 on Rugeri rootstock in sandy loam soils. The vines are trellised on a six-wire hedge system and receive supplementary, drip irrigation.

Winemaking (winemaker: Andries Jordaan)

Both the Ruby Cabernet and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were harvested by hand, mostly from pre-dawn to early morning. The Ruby Cabernet was picked in early March at 24,8° Balling, while the Cabernet Sauvignon was picked at 24° Balling in mid-March. The Shiraz was picked at 25° Balling in late February.

All three varieties were individually vinified. The Ruby Cabernet and Shiraz were fermented on the skins until dry for a period of 10 days at 24°C. After pressing, the wine underwent malolactic fermentation and was lightly oaked for a period of five months.

The Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were cold-soaked for three days before fermentation was allowed to commence. Fermentation took place at 24°C for 14 days after which the skins were pressed and malolactic fermentation completed. The wine was lightly oaked for five months. Before bottling the wine went through micro-oxygenation for six weeks to soften the tannins and stabilise the colour.

Winemaker's comments

Colour: Ruby red.

Bouquet: Stewed fruit, cherries and prunes with undertones of oak spice.

Taste: A medium-bodied, fruity and well-balanced wine with soft tannins.

Food pairing

Excellent enjoyed on its own or served with beef, game and mushroom dishes.

Chemical analysis

Alcohol: 14,52% by volume

Residual sugar: 3.40 g/l

Total acidity: 5.75 g/l

pH: 3,45

