

# 2019 Kershaw Elgin Chardonnay

RANGE: Clonal Selection

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Chardonnay made from Dijon clones CY96, CY95, CY76 and the Entav clone CY548.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Elgin, Western Cape, South Africa.

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 15.04 tons selected from 8 small parcels of Chardonnay.

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, Syrah and more recently Pinot Noir, to show a sense of place.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 25th February – 18th March 2019  
Brix at Harvest: 20.3 – 24.3

SEASON: In 2019 the rainfall increased back to long-term averages: 530 mm in the winter and 900mm total rainfall. This welcome rain fell throughout winter and well into spring. Better cold units allowed complete dormancy to the vines giving much-needed respite for the vines to sleep—a cooler spring resulting in a delayed bud break for the earlier budding Chardonnay. Cooler temperatures and gusty wind meant flowering was more irregular than average. Wind surges damaged some of the young shoots and the first flowers as well.

Cooler November temperatures affected the ability of the vines to pollinate correctly, resulting in "hen and chickens" or millerandage in which fewer berries appear on the eventual bunches.

As New Year came and went, summer was also colder than average and maximums during the hottest months never got more than 34°C. The cooler weather did help the vines accumulate flavour more gradually. As harvest approached, whilst there were some pleasant sunny days in February, nights started to cool early in March. We started picking Chardonnay in the last week of February about a week after the warmer weather had subsided. The crop size was smaller due to the flowering and cool and windy conditions, however, this cooler weather brought about higher malic acids that will give more bite and freshness to the wines as well as allowing synchronous ripening of sugar and secondary metabolites.

WINEMAKING: Grapes were hand-picked in the early autumnal mornings, placed into small lug baskets and tipped directly into a press before being gently whole-bunch pressed up to a maximum of 0.6 bar or until a low juice recovery of 620 litres per ton was obtained using our Willmes Sigma 5 press. The juice gravity-flowed directly to barrel without settling. The unclarified juice had no enzymes or yeast added to it and therefore underwent spontaneous fermentation until dry, with malolactic discouraged. The wine rested in barrel for four months before judicious sulphuring and a further seven months' maturation in barrel before racking, blending and bottling.

BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected, all from Burgundy and only French oak was chosen. Importantly, each clone and soil type was micro vinified as separate batches. Each batch used an algorithm that we have developed to ascertain which coopers work best and how many new and used barrels are utilised. Overall, the average in 2019 was 42.1% new oak; 89.8% 228 l and 10.2% 500 l.

ALCOHOL: 13.50%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 12 445 bottles; 60 Magnums and 3 Double Magnums.

TASTING PROFILE: Restrained, mineral style focussed on elegance with a white fruit character, some oatmeal and some complexity gained from percipient applied wood.



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