

Crystallum,

`Ferrum` Chardonnay 2023**Overberg, Western Cape, South Africa**

Grape Varieties	100% Chardonnay
Winemaker	Peter-Allan Finlayson
Closure	Diam
ABV	13%
Residual Sugar	2.6g/L
Acidity	6.3g/L
Wine pH	3.29
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

This small winery was established in 2007 by brothers Peter-Allan and Andrew Finlayson. Their father, Peter, was a pioneer in the production of cool climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir at Bouchard Finlayson, so after university it seemed the natural thing for the boys to return home and source some fruit from the Hemel-en-Aarde valley to start their own label. Crystallum is now one of the most highly regarded wineries in South Africa, yet the Finlaysons are determined to make even better wines. Peter-Allan has sourced fruit from some new vineyards, while winemaking has evolved. All of the wines are now fermented using indigenous yeasts and new oak has been reduced to help the bright fruit shine through.

VINEYARDS

The Ferrum Chardonnay is sourced from Crystallum's latest site, situated at 220 metres above sea level in the Shaw's Mountain area of the Overberg. The site mirrors the terroir in Hemel-en-Aarde while not technically falling within the region. The climate is marginally more moderate than nearby Kersaal, being closer to the coast. The wine's name is derived from the iron rich shale soils which naturally restrict vigour while allowing for optimum fruit development. Altitude and cooling sea breezes slow down the grape ripening process, resulting in grapes with excellent concentration of flavour balanced by a vibrant acidity.

VINTAGE

The 2023 vintage was not without its challenges. A very dry and warm start to the season and early bud break, was followed by cooler and wet weather in mid-December, which prolonged ripening. There was some sporadic rainfall in February, but fortunately, this had less impact on earlier ripening varieties during harvest. The resulting wines are focused and precise but with a slightly riper profile than the preceding vintage.

VINIFICATION

Upon arrival at the winery, the grapes were gently pressed as whole bunches to obtain a very clear juice. The juice was left to settle and then racked into 300-500L oak barrels (20% new), where the wine fermented naturally and remained on its lees for 10 months, gaining textural complexity. It was bottled by hand with no filtration or cold stabilisation to retain maximum intensity of flavour and character.

TASTING NOTES

On the nose, this single vineyard Chardonnay reveals aromas of lime leaf, sea spray, and lemongrass, as well as a subtle smokiness. The palate is energetic with real tension and balance. Rich textured is coupled with mouth-watering acidity and a long, layered finish.