

Crystallum,

`The Agnes` Chardonnay 2023

Cape South Coast, South Africa



Grape Varieties	100% Chardonnay
Winemaker	Peter-Allan Finlayson
Closure	Diam
ABV	13.5%
Residual Sugar	2.6g/L
Acidity	6.2g/L
Wine pH	3.34
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 Agnes' Chardonnay is produced from several different vineyards in the Hemel-en-Aarde and Overberg regions. The soils of these vineyards range from heavy clay to shale, sandstone and quartz. The final blend retains the characteristics of these individual sites, combining them to produce a wine which is both unique and greater than the sum of its parts.

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

'The Agnes' was produced using the traditional method of transferring the whole grape clusters straight into the press and running the juice off into a settling tank. The juice was then racked off the next day into 228 and 500 litre French oak barrels, 10% of which were new. Fermentation occurred naturally in barrel, where the wine then remained for ten months before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

This is a precise and linear expression of Chardonnay. On the nose, aromas of pineapple, light butterscotch, oatmeal, and lemon peel. The palate is zippy and textured, with notes of lime, quince, and pear leading to a refreshing, saline finish.