



ELEVATION “393” 2019

Every year I select the very best barrels from our stunning Elevation 393 vineyard, 370 to 410m above sea level on the slopes of the Helderberg mountain. One of the great places in the world to grow Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc as well as Syrah and Merlot.

The label has an elevation drawing of the house which I designed in the middle of the vineyard, which is at exactly 393m above sea level. I studied and worked as an Architect before diving wholeheartedly into wine many years ago.

VINEYARD

The site has deep granitic based soil that's rich in iron which gives substantial mid palate weight to the two Cabernets as well as ideal clay content that helps store moisture through our long summer droughts. The slopes are steep enough to shed excess moisture when we do receive more rain than we want, and in fact 2019 did benefit from this.

Apart from the great site, one of the unique characteristics of this vineyard is that the rows are narrow - 1,8m wide - with a higher than usual planting density. This means fewer bunches per vine, a more open canopy with smaller loose bunches allowing plenty of soft dappled sunlight to ripen the grapes. We get small, concentrated berries that are fully ripe without losing freshness and a good natural acidity.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

I love the 2019 vintage and feel it's the most underrated of the decade. Regular rainfall and low day and night temperatures during the ripening period meant there was no water stress, and ripening was gentle and slow. A challenging but exciting vintage with a restrained, elegant style.

PRODUCTION

Handpicked. Destemmed. Small open top fermenters with cap punched down. Natural yeast fermentation. Traditional hand basket press. Mostly small new French oak matured for 21 months.

Bottled by hand, unfinned and unfiltered, on the property. Labelled by hand.

Bottling date: 30/10/2020 Production: (8 barrels) 358 x 6 x 750ml, 60 x 1.5L, 8 x 3L

Cabernet Sauvignon 42% Merlot 29% Cabernet Franc 17% Syrah 12%

TASTING NOTES

Medium deep red / purple colour. Lovely plum, red berry, fruitcake and spices on the nose. Subtle, but layered and beguiling. Some herbaceous fynbos notes too. Long barrel ageing enhances rather than obscures the fruit. The cool, gentle ripening period really shows itself on the palate with one of our most refined tannin profiles yet. Layers of flavours. A luxury wine of real substance and a velvet touch. A joy to drink in 2026 but will evolve beautifully over a couple of decades.

Enjoy with slow roasted lamb, venison casserole or a fine rib-eye on the braai.

ANALYSIS

Alc. 14.36% SG 1.39g/l TA 5.31g/l pH 3.62 VA 0.67 SO₂ 4ppmfree 37ppm total

DAVID TRAFFORD