



Stellenbosch John X Merriman 2020

RUSTENBERG WINES

Introduction

This wine is named after a former owner of Rustenberg, John Xavier Merriman, who bought the farm in 1892 in sympathy with farmers suffering from the phylloxera crisis. He played a great role in revitalizing Rustenberg and in promoting the tourism and agricultural value of Ida's Valley, the area close to the town of Stellenbosch in which Rustenberg is situated. The John X Merriman is Rustenberg's Estate wine, a blend of Bordeaux varietals that illustrate the ageability and true expression of Rustenberg's finest vineyards. We recommend decanting this wine before serving.

Vintage

The 2020 vintage will be remembered as a good vintage produced under the spectre of the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the globe. Fortunately the harvest was not impacted on Rustenberg by the government-sanctioned lockdowns, allowing all fruit to be picked and processed when ripe. A good winter in 2019 saw a return to average rainfall for the year. Two unusual weather events in the growing season, a large rainstorm and a heat wave, impacted some varietals flowering and berry set, however, in the context of the entire vintage these had a minor impact. Crop levels were up by 15% from the 2019 vintage, which saw a return to yields being average to slightly above average for most varietals. Quality wise, the white wines have superb acids and more moderate alcohols with wonderful fruit concentration, while the reds tend to be more medium-bodied with moderate alcohols, good freshness and supple tannins, potentially to be enjoyed earlier.

Vineyard

Wine of Origin	Simonsberg-Stellenbosch
Varietal Blended	Cabernet Sauvignon 43%, Merlot 36%, Petit Verdot 14%, Malbec 7%
Soil Types	Decomposed Granite
Trellising/Pruning System	VSP (Vertical Shoot Positioned), 2 Node Spur Pruned
Irrigation Type	Minimal Drip Irrigation
Picking Method & Date	Hand Picked, February-March 2020

Winemaking

Extraction Method	Crushed and Destemmed Fruit, Pumped Over During Ferment
Fermentation Vessel	Stainless Steel Tanks
Yeast	Cultured Active Dry Wine Yeast
Extended Maceration	For +/- 7 days
Oak Aging	100% aged for 20 Months
Age and Type of Oak	35% New French barriques; 65% 2nd & 3rd fill
Fining Agents Used	Egg White (Albumen)
Final Analysis	Alc v/v: 14% TA 5.6g/L pH 3.65 RS 2.6g/L
Bottling Date	October 2021
Extraction Method	Crushed and Destemmed Fruit, Pumped Over During Ferment

Wine

Tasting Note	Cassis, black currant and dark fruits complemented with cigar tobacco and sour cherry notes. As the wine ages its fine-grained tannins soften, and a more savoury palate develops.
Ageing Potential	10 to 15 years from vintage under ideal cellaring conditions





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Accolades

Award:	Competition/Publication:	Year/Edition:
93 Points	Tim Atkin SA Report	2022
93 Points – 4.5 Stars	Platter’s Wine Guide	2023
92 Points	James Suckling	2022
92 Points	Winemag.co.za – Christiaan Eedes	2022
92 Points	Robert Parker’s Wine Advocate	2023
Silver Medal – 91 Points	International Wine Challenge	2022