

Rustenberg Wines

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Owner(s): The Barlow Family

Winemaker(s): Murray Barlow

WO; Stellenbosch / Western Cape / Coastal



The modern and impressive tasting room, with central stairway, sits among historic buildings surrounded by vines and lawns. Picture opportunities everywhere.

Vintage Score best drinking

Sauvignon Blanc

R

	2008	83	2008-2011
2010: pale with pronounced herbaceous nose and hints of guava. Forceful, touch abrasive and very dry.	2010	84	2010-2014
2012: classic sauvignon varietal, gooseberry and nettles in aroma and palate. Fresh and zesty.	2012	86	2012-2018
2015: hugely pungent and expressive, very New Zealand style, lots of gooseberry and crisp green fruit.	2015	87	2015-2022
2017: pale straw, rich tropical notes with steely taut lines and enjoyable viscosity, gentle pineapple and lemon.	2017	85	2017-2024
2018: vibrant and zesty, with tropical fruit notes, pineapple and grapefruit, nicely firm.	2018	87	2018-2026
2019: overt passion fruit and warmly exotic fruited aromas, fresh and quenching acidity with a softer, creamy finish.	2019	86	2019-2026
2020: mineral notes and steely green fruits with tight zesty feel and some tropical fruit on the finish. Less exotically fruited than '19.	2020	88	2020-2027
2021: deliciously poised between clean zest bite and warm Stellenbosch tropical fruits, the best yet.	2021	90	2021-2028

Wild Ferment Sauvignon Blanc

RR

2018: full and assertive, tropical fruit peach richness, layered and lush with more depth than expected.	2018	90	2019-2027
2019: more wooded note than '18, some SO2 also, then creamy tropical fruit richness, dry and punchy finish.	2019	89	2019-2028

Ida's White

R

2011: youthfull zesty lemon nose, touch shy with bracing acidity. Needs food.	2011	80	2011-2014
2012: fresh and fruity in a straightforward, lighter style for easy drinking.	2012	83	2012-2018

Schoongezicht SWB

RR

2010: floral notes, then nicely balanced creamy stone fruits. Touch linear and doesn't linger.	2010	83	2011-2015
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Viognier

R

	2007	86	2007-2015
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Roussanne

RR

	2008	85	2008-2016
2011: steely yellow then rich, buttery oak nose with green apple and white flowers. Lacks identity.	2011	83	2011-2019
2017: shy nose then minerality and floral white aromatics, light and breezy stone fruit.	2017	85	2017-2024
2020: floral nose, light and attractive, then textured and fresh white petal notes, fruity if brief.	2020	88	2020-2027

Chenin Blanc R

2018: pale depth, orange peel and apple notes, savoury herb crisp	2018	88	2018-2028
2019: very pretty nose and similar exotic fruit palate, baked apple, summer perfumed, compelling and pristine.	2019	91	2020-2028

Unwooded Chardonnay R

	2010	82	2010-2015
2010: citrus orange peel nose, flinty dry palate in a quaffable style.			
2014: watery hue, fresh citrus fruit, creamy mouthfeel and pleasant if fleeting.	2014	85	2014-2021
2015: more restrained and delightfully delicate, with clean fruit and some elegance.	2015	84	2015-2022
2016: perfect example of lees contact, rich, creamy and still fresh and delicious	2016	90	2016-2026
2018: very pale, moderate peach and pear nose, fuller, fruity tropical palate, steely, dry and fresh.	2018	89	2018-2027
2019: straw yellow just, then clean citrus – almost steely – notes, bright and finishing heavier with creamy lees softness.	2019	89	2019-2028
2020: paler than '19, with forward fruit driven palate, some lees weight but still nimble, clean and lighter styled.	2020	88	2020-2028

Stellenbosch Chardonnay RR

2009: little ageing visible, oaky nose then rich full palate of toffee and caramel. Long finish.	2009	88	2010-2018
2019: creamy and softish nose, but nicely fresh palate of apricot and orange, linear and precise and very good.	2019	91	2020-2028

Five Soldiers Chardonnay

RRRR

2015: lots of oak notes and tannins, overt and with good weight, rich tropical notes and creamy finish.	2015	89	2016-2026
2017: sweet fruit aromas and full bodied lush fruit impact, tropical notes and lees richness, layered and long.	2017	92	2018-2028
2018: mid gold depth, rich nose, peaches, vanilla and cream, layered and viscous but not heavy, quite elegant, distinguished and compelling.	2018	92	2019-2029
2019: another bold and deeply fruited version, with almond creamy tones, bright yellow stone fruits, length, class and intensity.	2019	92	2020-2029

Petit Verdot Rosé

R

2018: pale copper hue, shy nose, raspberry and Turkish delight, perfumed and syrupy, finishing dry.	2018	85	2018-2024
2019: light cherry appearance and nuances, fruity with strawberry pastille sweet-shop notes, dry but not puckering.	2019	84	2019-2024

Ida's Red

R

2011: berry jam nose with mocha then tangy, juicy fruit in an uncomplicated style.	2011	83	2011-2016
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Grenache

RR

2017: glossy pale cherry hue, delicate depth, dry, dusty red berry notes, savoury and restrained.	2017	88	2017-2027
2018: prettily pale and glossy with a smoky wood nose then sweet and delicate reb berry compote, elegant and alluring.	2018	91	2019-2028

Merlot

RR

2010: mid depth, savoury berry nose, with textured, confident fruit needing 2/3 more years.	2010	87	2011-2018
2016: bright cherry gloss and perfume, balanced acidity and wild red berry flavours	2016	85	2017-2027
2018: ruby depth, bold, perfumed nose, plums and black cherry, vanilla and generous fruited, has potential.	2018	88	2019-2029

Malbec

RR

2020: mid depth with muted blue fruit and dusty wood tannins, full and capable of aging.	2020	88	2021-2028
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Stellenbosch Cabernet Sauvignon

RR

2016: nicely balanced soft round fruit with firm structure and dry plum notes.	2016	85	2016-2026
2017: inky depth of dark blue fruits, sweet mulberry and cassis nose, elegant, sexy and nicely balanced.	2017	91	2018-2028
2018: chalky tannins, quite soft and mellow, on mixed dark fruits, effective if straightforward and ending too quickly.	2018	88	2019-2029
2019: blue fruit forward nose then smooth blueberry notes with oak support, stylish and not heavy.	2019	88	2019-2029

Shiraz

RR

	2007	91	2009-2018
2009: deep purple hue, shy, brooding nose then dark spicy fruit and dry tannins. Built for serious enjoyment.	2009	92	2011-2020
2011: mid purple and fruit forward in an	2011	87	2011-2020

easy drinking style.			
2015: bramble aromas, untamed and grippy, less peppery style, not heavy and brief.	2015	85	2016-2026
2016: deeply hued, sinewy black fruits and supportive oak, bramble and spice and round mouthfeel.	2016	87	2017-2027
2018: ruby depths with a serious weighty nose then more fruity mixed berry palate, dry and with furry tannins, pliant and endearing.	2018	90	2019-2028

RM Nicholson

RR

2009: shy nose of wet pepper and spice, followed by lush, alluring fruit with a nice balance. Drink soon.	2009	87	2009-2018
2016: deep ruby depth, very dry, lighter styled yet lush and fully fruited with grippy wood finish.	2016	88	2017-2026
2017: large and gutsy, with presently tight and a touch astringent tannins, yet to smooth out, over deep black fruit density. Will improve.	2017	89	2019-2029
2018: opaque hue, deep smoky plum nose, violets and blue fruits, tactile and attractive but doesn't linger.	2018	89	2019-2029
2020: pitch black with a spicy dark fruit nose, rustic powerful body with balanced tannins.	2020	89	2020-2029

John X Merriman

RR

2005: tasted at ten years old and still firm and fresh with bold fruit and fine tannins.	2005	89	2006-2020
	2006	91	2008-2020
2008: earthy red berry nose then rich, dark fruit and subtle tannins. Robust, big style.	2008	88	2009-2016
2010: smooth, sweet and exciting, with silk tannins and lush fruit. Well crafted and addictive.	2010	93	2012-2022
2011: inky hue with deep blue fruit palate, dark notes and ripe fruit.	2011	91	2012-2022

2012: sweet, ripe fruit entry, notes of game and lush cassis, quite accessible already.	2012	88	2014-2024
2014: overt and intense, with spicy grip, plums and oak, dense and sinewy.	2014	87	2015-2025
2015: touch lighter in feel, elegant and unwinds slowly, will improve, dense dark fruit not yet showing.	2015	90	2017-2028
2016: deep dusty ruby hue, lots of dark fruit, mellow and with chalky tannins. Elegant yet quite burly and competent, good length.	2016	91	2017-2029
2017: the best yet, perfumed cassis nose, silky deep fruited with mocha, Horlicks and cedar hint, blackcurrant lozenge mouthfeel, balanced and succulent.	2017	92	2019-2030

Buzzard Kloof Syrah RRR

2015: hugely textured, rich and sumptuous, with hints of spice, white pepper and plum, quite seductive.	2015	92	2017-2028
2018: inky depths with an understated nose then perfumed lavender and plum luxury, opening slowly and lingering, delicious.	2018	92	2020-2029

Peter Barlow RRRR

	2005	94	2008-2020
2006: deeply coloured, elegant and silky in the mouth then explosive fruit power. Seductive cassis and blueberries, totally sumptuous.	2006	93	2008-2019
2007: Another monster, but so balanced one can enjoy the sheer class, weight and length of this wine now.	2007	94	2010-2023
2008: beautiful nose, perfumed and seductive then chary oak and promising fruit needing time to show.	2008	91	2009-2022
2009: beautifully restrained food wine with classy elegant fruit, layered and complex, still	2009	90	2010-2025

evolving.		
2015: inky depth, sombre and brooding, blackcurrant depth, complex and better after four years.	2015 92	2018-2028
2017: barrel sample shows huge fruit intensity, dark cassis, ripe tannins and lush satisfaction. Will be lovely and score higher.	2017 91	2020-2032
2018: ruby gloss, deeply fruited nose, bright fresh currants and cassis flavours with hidden wood structure, elegance, silky core and complexity. Still evolving.	2018 93	2019-2030

Straw Wine 375m RRR

2009: mid gold and ethereal, delicate floral notes and dances on the palate. Unctuous without being cloying. Delicious chilled.	2009 90	2010-2020
2017: terrific restraint, the 240gRS hardly imposes on a floral, fine wine, staying crisp and ethereal despite its richness.	2017 92	2017-2028
2019: mid gold with overt nose, candied dry fruits, peach and orange rind, full but not sticky despite 220g/l of RS.	2019 90	2020-2030

Red Muscadel RR

2015: bright cherry pink, Muscat perfume, fresh, nicely balanced, summer compote. Delicious.	2015 86	2015-2025
2019: pale pink, with sweet cherry and Turkish delight ripeness, simple and fun and showing its 210g/l of sweetness.	2019 87	2019-2026