

PLUM PUDDING Hill

By STELLENZICHT

Winemaker: Guy Webber assisted by Samantha de Morney - Hughes

Appellation: Stellenbosch

Grape Varietal: Syrah - single vineyard wine

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Background: Stellenzicht is situated on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain between Stellenbosch and Somerset West. It lies in a prime wine-growing area close to False Bay at altitudes that ensure slow ripening and exposure to soils imparting complexity to the wines. Plum Pudding Hill Syrah is a sublime edition of the single vineyard wine, in the "Specialities" tier of Stellenzicht's highly regarded portfolio.

Climatic Data:

The 2011 vintage can be generally describes as having been warm and dry. While the average temperatures during the season were not dramatically higher than the long-term average, a severe heatwave in February (just before picking) resulted in a quick final build-up of sugars within the fruit and thus also quite concentrated flavours.

The drier conditions (628mm total rainfall vs 795mm average) also necessitated an additional supplementary irrigation just prior to harvest in order to aid the vines in fully-ripening their fruit.

The effects of the warmer season were somewhat mitigated by more-than-average windy conditions during October and December and these winds, together with the lower overall humidity, resulted in very healthy fruit with very concentrated flavours.

Vineyards:

Yields for this vintage were quite average at 4.28 tonnes per hectare with relatively high sugars of 26,3° Balling. Acids were unexpectedly good for the season (5.86 g/l) with corresponding pH's at 3.60.

Grapes were harvested by hand on 14 March 2011 at temperatures of between 17 and 23° Celsius.

Syrah 2011

Vinification:

After crushing, the mash was cooled down to 13° Celsius and transferred to a horizontal stainless steel fermenter. A selected yeast culture (NT 202) was immediately inoculated and the fermentation was allowed to continue with 15-minute pump-overs taking place every two hours. Fermentation temperatures were allowed to peak at 26°C.

The juice was separated from the skins and the skins pressed just before completion of alcoholic fermentation. Free-run juice and the press fraction were separated and the wines transferred to storage tanks over night before being transferred to a selection of 300-litre barrels for malolactic fermentation to take place spontaneously.

Maturation took place in 100% new French oak barrels. Total maturation time in barrel was 30 months before the wine was readied for bottling.

A total of 3234 bottles was filled on 27 January 2014

Winemaker's comments:

Colour: Inky ruby with rims of garnet.

Nose: Wonderfully-fresh and complex with attractive ripe sweetness of red-fruit notes, spicy oak and toasty smokiness. Roasted nuts and faint peppadew-characters linger to the first sip.

Palate: Full-bodied with integrated oaking showing through layers of austere sweet plums, ripe cherries and wet tobacco. A luscious roundness is offset by serious, yet friendly tannins and a long and memorable finish.

Ageing potential

Eight to fifteen years.

Food Pairing

The fullness of the wine dictates that it should be paired with fuller-flavoured dishes such as spicy espetadas, shish kebabs or barbequed spare ribs. For something a bit different, also try a tuna tartare laced with rocket pesto.

Chemical analysis:

Alcohol: 15.7 %vol

Total Extract: 31.3 g/l

Residual Sugar: 3.2 g/l

Total Acid: 6.2 g/l

Volatile Acid: 0.70 g/l

pH: 3.28

Free SO₂: 4 ppm

Total SO₂: 16 ppm(at release)

