

CONSTANTIA GLEN THREE 2020



CONSTANTIA
GLEN

HARVEST SUMMARY BY WINEMAKER, JUSTIN VAN WYK

2020 was a remarkable vintage for red grape varieties at Constantia Glen. It was a somewhat warmer vintage than both the preceding and following vintages, but the quality of fruit was outstanding. It was a slightly earlier-than-normal vintage in Constantia due to a warm February that hastened ripening a little. Besides the weather conditions, I for one will never forget the unique challenges we faced during the 2020 harvest season. On 23 March 2020, in the early stages of our red wine harvest, our South African President announced that the country would go into a full lockdown 3 days later to combat the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The announcement struck panic, as there was initially no dispensation offered for the agricultural sector. For 3 days we harvested as much Merlot and Cabernet Franc as we could whilst we still had the labour to do so, but about two-thirds of our estate red wine crop was still hanging on the vines by the time we went into the hard lock-down on 26 March 2020, including all the Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot on the estate. On the morning of this first day of the lock-down, a special dispensation was declared allowing the agricultural sector to continue working to secure the harvest. With “essential service” permits to allow us to continue working, we completed harvesting the red grapes on the estate, with textbook ripening conditions ensuing all the way through until we picked the final block of Cabernet Sauvignon on 9 April 2020. Despite it being an earlier vintage than usual, our vineyards still ripened the grapes optimally and we achieved fantastic phenolic ripeness, which allowed for confident extraction of tannins and flavours during vinification. The reds from this vintage are striking and powerful, yet they possess the typical elegance and finesse that our cool-climate region is known for.

COLOUR

Youthful in colour with a very dark garnet core unwinding into a lively magenta rim.

NOSE

Dark fruit aromas, ripe blackcurrant and juicy black plums underpinned by a fragrance of dried herbs. Beyond the initial ripe fruit flavours, there is lovely savoury complexity and lingering floral aromas together with notes of white pepper, graphite, and cedar.

PALATE

The dark fruit flavours and distinct savoury notes on the nose follow effortlessly onto that first sip where elegant, velvety tannins grip the palate in a vibrant intensity of flavour. The excellent richness and concentration of fine-grain tannins is further echoed by an earthy minerality, and the wine’s inherent freshness brings about a long, well-defined finish. This wine is poised, elegant and possesses old world authenticity that reign in the powerful fruit flavours. The wine comes across as tightly wound in its youth with incredible ageing potential.

TECHNICAL DATA

This delicious three-way blend was carefully crafted from grapes grown on the estate. It comprises 65% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Cabernet Franc and was matured for 18 months in 25% new, 60% second-fill and 15% third-fill French oak barrels. The wine was not fined, but only lightly filtered prior to bottling to gently mellow the rich tannin structure. This astounding vintage shows beautiful elegance as well as the round, velvety texture that has become synonymous to the Constantia Glen THREE. It can be enjoyed in its youth, yet it will certainly age and develop admirably for another 8-12 years from harvest, under ideal cellaring conditions.

Alcohol	14.5%
Residual Sugar	2.3 g/L
pH	3.67
Titrateable Acidity	5.30 g/L
VA	0.66 g/L

FOOD PAIRING

Seared venison medallions with celeriac puree and red wine jus. Asparagus and mushroom risotto with fresh pecorino. Slow-roasted shoulder of lamb served with wild mushrooms and rocket. Salted lamb chops or duck-breast grilled to crispy perfection over vine coals.

