Graham Beck Harvest 2013 News VII

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Focus of Base Wines turn towards Bubbles !

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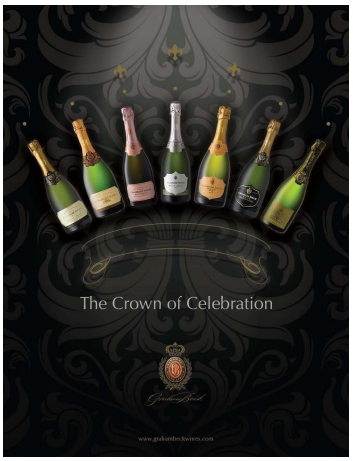
Special points of interest:

- Tank Tetris remains a reality.
- Spirit of the Robertson's Harvest team remains on a high despite a lull in the vintage!
- Hands on Harvest 2013— Memorable day and we have new friends of GBW.
- DNA fingerprinting?

Literally feels like we can do the celebration of the crown. With much abated effort by all we have all our bubbly grapes in for 2013 and we are happy to report that we will meet market expectations.

It certainly has been one of the most testing window periods for whole bunch reception, for a long-long time—but we are happy with what we got in the cellar and satisfied it is in. Many, a many fruit bin after fruit bin together with all the logistics that goes with it—it's a done deal!

Base wine tasting continues daily as all the base wine fermentations are completed and we need to direct them into full tanks and individual components. As we started off with 88 different parcels we will slowly taste through all them and start to dwindle them down to approx. 50 to 60 components at this stage.



It is very exciting to see which blocks surprises and which ones are our 'gatekeepers' of the various Cap Classique styles we will eventually blend together.

It is early days (- far to early to be precise) but indications on the nose and palate show that we have sufficient volumes to fill our requirements in the Vintage and of the Non Vintage ranges.



Regarding the gems, they remain in the cellar until we have tasted them again and again and see how they shine.

Until we taste again! - Cheers!!

Update on Harvest 2013

There has been a bit of a lull period since our last harvest newsletter and it comes to mind: what do you do when there are now grapes coming to the winery?…. Well I must say it is quite odd but there is always something to do.

We might get to all the little or big things we normally don't have time for in 'rush-hour' Like repairing leaking wine hoses or just general cleaning and so on. This week sees the last of Chardonnay and Viognier being harvested. Tank Tetris has not left us so the juggling continue trying to fill tanks.



Mr 'Fixit'—Dawie

Look at Varietals: **PINOT MEUNIER**



pronounced: [pi.no mø.nje], also known just as Meunier, is a variety of black grape most noted for being one of the three main varieties used in the production of Champagne.

Pinot Meunier tends to be planted in areas too cold or prone to late spring frosts—as an insurance grape against a poor or extreme cold year. It buds extremely late but ripens earlier than Chardonnay or Pinot Noir.

It matures more quickly than Pinot Noir, which makes it ideal to help soften non-vintage Champagnes in their youth.

However on its own it does not age well and might fall short of balance if not supported by Chardonnay and/or Pinot Noir. Therefor it is less common to see this grape in vintage Champagne.

Meunier in French means 'miller' and the use of the word in the variety's name refers to the 'floury' appearance of the underside of the vine's leaves.

In South Africa only about 25 ha is planted and producers are still feeling their way with this grape in local MCC blends.

Pinot Meunier is lighter than Pinot Noir and it can taste of confected fruit occasionally with slightly smoky flavours.

Mossie's shares his rare beauties!





Actual size

Robertson Dwarf Chameleon (Bradypodion gutturale)

HABITAT: Vicinity of Worcester and Robertson in The South Western Cape. Often spotted in the Critical endangered, Breede Sand Fynbos sections of our conservation area and sometimes in low mountain fynbos scrub.

Truly a dwarf (see photo of actual size) and a regular visitor to our vineyards.

This specie is absolutely confined to the area we produce wine in. Difficult to spot since it is always much smaller than anticipated.

One of the only dwarf chameleons in South Africa, with a tail much shorter than the body. With its common blue-grey colors and rust-coloured lateral tubercles and a dorsal crest, this guy can hide in any bush without any body noticing.

Never the less this could be considered our own dinosaur if inspected closely, what a beautiful creature.



Spotlight on: Attie Pieterse



Attie started with Graham Beck Wines in 1995 as caretaker of our Community Centre. As we were short of a cellar hand in 1996 we borrowed Attie and he impressed us so much—he never returned as caretaker! — we kept him! Attie lives in Robertson and is married with two daughters (ages 16 & 11) and a son of 15. His son is the proud designer of this year's harvest T-Shirt. Attie's current position is senior cellar worker. During his years he has completed numerous courses, including the SKOP courses and the Cape Wine Academy Certificate course. He also went on the Burgundy Exchange Program in 2008 to France. We are extremely proud of him and is known as the "Filter King" - a master machine operator. The things that bothers Attie: "*I get frustrated when there is a lull in a day—I get bored not doing something or contributing in winemaking!*"

What makes Attie happy: "*Plays rugby for local club and loves listening to Gospel music* "

If you are looking for Attie, you will find him in the laboratory!

Landmark Foundation—Leopard & Predator Project

Part II— Attributes:

Spot identification of Cape Leopard is done by using unique rosettes or patterns — see picture on the right.

Size of female and males can be done by measuring shoulder height of Females (F): 55 cm and Males (M): 60 cm and paw sizes - F = 7.5 cm & M = 8.5 cm

Weight: of Cape Leopard: F – Average 21 kg (19 - 21 kg) and M – Average 40 kg (33 - 46 kg)

Lifespan is 8 to 12 years depending on resources, threats and habitat . The range and territory of them: Range= the area that an individual will travel to seek food or mates and Territory = the smaller area that an individual claims and defends. This is highly variable and largely dependent on the resource availability for eg. mountain vs. forest (forest range about 1/2 size because of greater resource availability)

Leopards can take prey up to 10x their body weight.

Broad spectrum habitat dependent diet: Include rodents, birds, porcupine, dassies, and small antelope.

Social behavior: Normally solitary exceptions when mating or having cubs Mainly active at night

Litters of 2-3 cubs, with 25% survival rate.

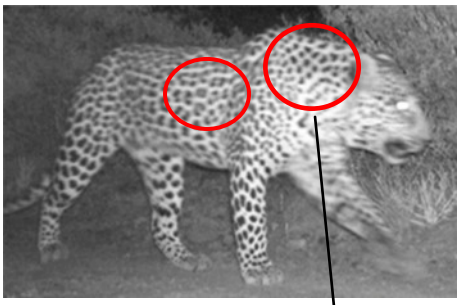
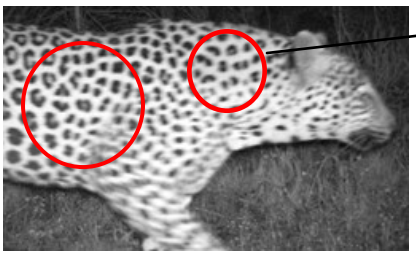


Fig A

Fig B





Spots belong to leopard in Fig A

Hands on Harvest 2013!

What a wonderful and fun-filled day had by all!!!!! In simple terms—*"Just do It"* no is not just another Nike add. To everyone involved thank you so much for making it happen. We have certainly gained lots of new friends and definite 'barkers' of our brand for the future. A beautiful, as pretty as it can get here in Robertson, actually a peach of a day. The group joined the Graham Beck picking team in the vineyard and they all picked two lug-boxes of Viognier. They arrived with their grapes by tractor and trailer. Well deserved breakfast, then hand sorted and crush/de-stemmed the Viognier. Then a taste of base wines and all stories relating to the magic of bubbles. After tasting and the show of the cellar they joined Mossie on a wonderful drive through the Graham Beck Nature Reserve and retired for lunch at Mossies' Lapa in the Game Reserve with many a glass of Graham Beck bubbles to celebrate your maiden or next vintage harvest experience.

Afterwards Pierre and Pieter returned, quite reluctantly, to yet another afternoon of normal harvesting day!

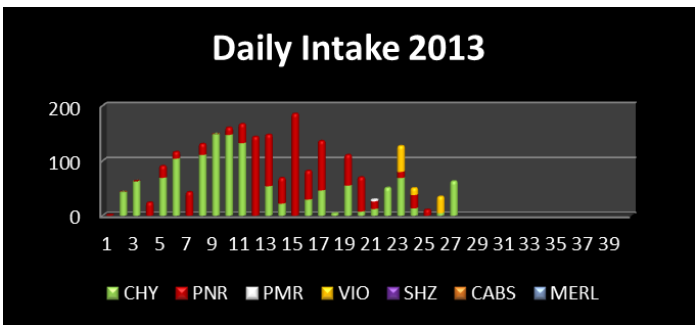
More pictures soon on M:/drive



The harvest rollercoaster — so far!

As time never stops during harvest, we are happy the say that we have had a few quitter days. This is normal as we have to wait for our red grapes to reach optimum phenolic ripeness. A whole another science!

Yes, we do get time to catch up with all the other things we do not always get to when one is so busy—you might ask what are they?: Well 'dreaded' admin for one (a bit of a pity…..as harvest is always a good excuse not to get to it ;) and EZY! In there days we can get to repair broken wine hoses, sanitizing and cleaning of equipment, etc. Another important fact is keeping motivation and our moral high in times there are no grapes! Nothing like a good BRAAI!



Should you wish to contribute to this newsletter please forward or send me any interesting story or information you might think we can add to the next one. There is so many wonderful untold stories…..

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Nothing less

At Graham Beck Wines, winemaking is a combination of creative mediation between unpredictable 'Mother Nature' and modern basic technology and the expression of our passionate pursuit of perfection. Therefor the motto: ***"in search of the perfect bubble"*** With its subtle colours, innovative design and sweeping vistas, our Robertson brand home blends effortlessly into the surrounding Karoo landscape. The overall design is a tribute to the splendour of the South African veld.

Adorned by artwork from the private Graham Beck collection, our tasting facilities are unlike any experienced before. Sip on the excellent range of Cap Classique and still wines from the award winning Graham Beck portfolio while enjoying the most incredible view of the surrounding landscape from our tasting room.

A welcoming atmosphere, professional approach and passion for hospitality ensure a rewarding cellar door experience. Trading Hours—Monday - Friday: 09h00 - 17h00 and Saturday, Sunday & Public Holidays: 10h00 - 16h00—Disabled friendly!

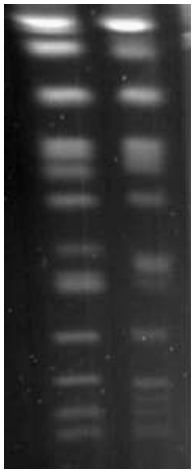


Fig A

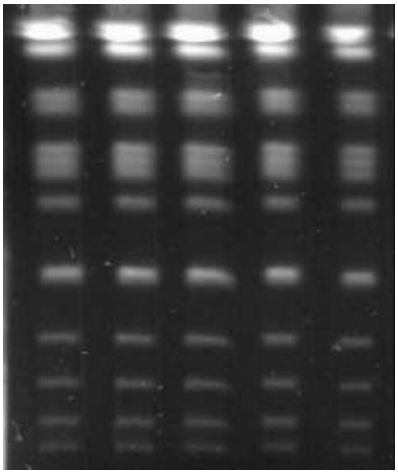


Fig B

Fingerprinting of Graham Beck Wines' own Yeast?

What is fingerprinting exactly?

We have been involved for a few years now with the ARC-Infruitec at Nietvoorbij under guidance of Dr Neil Jolly—in fingerprinting natural yeasts or generally known as 'wild' yeast, that may occur on our own grapes in Robertson. It helps us to understand which particularly yeast does the work during fermentation. So when it is a wild –yeast then we can take it to the next step of isolating a specific yeast.

Above left, you see two "DNA" pictures— Fig A & Fig B. Figure A indicates the profile of two commercial strains, Vin 13 & IOC 18-2007, which were used as control strains, Figure B illustrates profiles of 5 samples received from Graham Beck Wines. Yeast strains isolated from the 5 samples show identical CHEF karyotypes (fingerprints)

In all of Nietvoorbij's yeast database (comprising of 64 yeast strains) early indication shows that these samples does not relate to any of them, although slight genetic similarities to two other strains, but the results show that one yeast strain occurs throughout all samples.

The is very exciting indeed as we now know that we might have the opportunity to develop and multiply our own yeast in the future. Who knows it might be "*Grahambeckiae S. cerevisiae*" in future.

This work was done by Micha Rodez while he was with us for the bubbly harvest. Come and taste our own yeast profile!