



AXE HILL

Calitzdorp

KLEIN KAROO

Vineyard: From the **Klien Karro** region, Wesoever vineyard (West bank side of the Nel's River) is located on a slope looking east and the Dorbank vineyard and is located on the valley with its rows planted on the North/South direction against an east facing slope.

Soil Type: Alluvial

Vine Age: Vineyards planted in 1993

Irrigation: Lightly Irrigated

Harvest Date: Mid February

Yield: 5 to 6 tons per hectare

Vinification:

A South African Port, (all port styles produced in SA are prefixed with "CAPE" as in Cape Vintage or Cape Ruby etc. in terms of an agreement with the EU.) Axe Hill produces a variety of styles, the 2007 Cape Vintage comprising a blend of Touriga Nacional, Tinta Barroca & Souzão. Grapes are harvested at 25 to 26° Balling and Axe Hill Cape Vintage is made in the traditional Portuguese way. After picking, the grapes are crushed, de-stemmed in open concrete lagares (concrete tanks) where they are treaded by foot. Each stage of the crushing phase is followed as per the traditional method.

The first stage is called 'corte' or 'cut' which is when treaders form a line in the lagare (must is around knee height) and slowly tread/break the fruit to further release the pulp and juice. Treading by foot ensures that harsh tannins from the pips are not released into the wine and also ensures optimal color extraction. The second stage is called 'libertade' or 'liberty' and this is to ensure that the skins are kept submerged by the must, treaders walk around the lagare individually. After maceration for around a day, fermentation starts; the heat increases in the must and alcohol is slowly produced further releasing color, tannins and the aroma from the skins. The treading stops after a day or so and the skins rise to the surface to form a thick layer (cap) and the wine continues to ferment below the cap. The cap is "punched down" regularly to ensure homogenous fermentation temperatures as well to continue to extract color and tannin.

The wine is fortified at 10° Balling using un-aged brandy spirit. By adding brandy the alcohol level of the wines increases to the point where the yeast responsible for the fermentation can no longer survive. In the process, the residual sugar level in the must is still relatively high, thus preserving a portion of the natural sweetness of the grape in the wine. The decision when to "fortify" is a crucial point in the life of a port. After a week of settling, the port is racked into old 500 liters French oak barrels (15 years old) where it will age for one year and thereafter racked to tank for a further year. Axe Hill Vintage Port is bottled within two years of harvest.

Color: Deep dark in the centre, bright ruby on the rim.

Nose: Ripe violets, red berries, prunes and nuts with hints of licorice and spices.

Palate: It is youthful with a firm grip supported by rich fruits and fine tannins.

Other: It is harmonious, soft with a satisfying finish. It was age well.

Alcohol (%): 20.4

RS (g/l): 91.34

TA (g/l): 4.5

pH: 3.73

Limited Production : 1,297 bottles- 2007 Vintage

Platter's Buying Guide : 5 STARS- 2007



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