

# CIRCLE OF LIFE

## WHITE 2012



### A TASTING NOTE FROM THE GLASS OF NADIA BARNARD

LIME AND PEACH NOTES. INTENSE, WITH GREAT BALANCE. A TIGHT MINERAL CORE AND CREAMY MIDDLE PALATE ALLOWS FOR GREAT COMPLEXITY AND A PERSISTENT FINISH.

### IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

Working with nature allows us to experience its natural cycle every year. Vines awaken from their rest in spring, growing and producing fruit until the next winter when they go to sleep again. This cycle is also evident through the biodynamic practices that we follow on Waterkloof. Circle of Life is inspired by this cycle that exists not only on Waterkloof, but life in general.

Our focus over the last ten years, has been to get a better understanding of Waterkloof and the individual characters of its vineyards. We discovered that vineyards from different parts of Waterkloof produced wines that were stylistically very different. Through the Circumstance wines, we have always tried to allow these vineyards to express their individuality.

Conversely, our objective with Circle of Life has been to produce two blends which encapsulate all the varying terroir characteristics and grape varieties within Waterkloof. Thus, rather than being constrained by a traditional blending style, for example a Bordeaux or Rhone blend, we have instead produced two wines that are not driven by varietal or a specific parcel of the vineyard, but are wines that reflect the totality, philosophy and specificity of Waterkloof.

### A GENTLE HAND

We mainly rely on tasting the grapes to determine the optimum stage of flavour development. Grapes are picked early in the morning when they are still cool, which helps to preserve the flavours. Extracting juice from the grapes is achieved through pressing the whole bunches. This is the most delicate way to extract the juice.

After a settling period of 24 hours, a large proportion of the juice was destined for co-fermentation. That is to say, we determined a blend of sauvignon and chenin prior to fermentation and transferred the majority into old 600 litre barrels, with the balance going into stainless steel tanks. Ultimately, this allowed for a better integrated and more complete end product. After a very long, natural yeast fermentation of seven months, the wine was left on the primary lees for a further four months. This helped to add more complexity and weight to the palate. The wine was then racked to fermentation tank and the final blend was made up, with the addition of further Sauvignon Blanc, Chenin and Semillon being made to the co-fermented component. The wine was then bottled in January 2012.

We make the wine as naturally as possible, with no additions of acids or enzymes allowed.

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### AND A FEW PRAYERS TO MOTHER NATURE: THE 2011/12 GROWING SEASON

Winter seems to be the foundation on which every new season is built. It sets up the vines for the coming growing season and its effects can be felt throughout. We experienced very cold weather in the early part of winter, which allowed for even bud break in spring. Vines did bud a bit earlier than normal due to the warmer weather experienced during the latter part of winter. Rainfall was very low during the winter period which is always a problem in areas where we rely on winter rains for our dams as well as to fill up the ground water levels. The dry conditions followed through into summer with a smaller crop the result. Very warm weather in early January caused sunburn in dry land areas and had a negative effect on the size of the crop. Fortunately the warm spell was followed by cooler temperatures for the rest of the ripening period. Grapes could ripen properly and harvest started about 2 weeks later than normal due to the cool growing conditions during the final ripening period.

### THE NUMBERS (59 410 BOTTLES PRODUCED)

Alc 13.5% RS 4.8g/l TA 6.5g/l pH 3.15