



KANONKOP



With a reputation for producing some of the Cape's finest red wines, the heralded Kanonkop Estate is often referred to as a South African "First Growth." The fourth generation family farm, presently run by brothers Johann and Paul Krige, has been owned and operated by the Sauer-Krige family since the early 1930s.

The name Kanonkop is derived from a "kopje" (small hill) on the property, from which a cannon was fired in the 17th century to announce the arrival of the Dutch East India Company's trading ships at Table Bay. Upon hearing this signal, local farmers would load their wagons and set off for the harbor to barter their produce.

Situated on the lower slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain in Stellenbosch, Kanonkop encompasses just over 100 hectares of vineyards at altitudes of 60 – 120 meters above sea level. Cooling breezes from False Bay providing natural "air conditioning" for the vineyards, which are planted predominantly on red decomposed granite and Hutton. With their high clay content and excellent water retention properties, these soil types eliminate the need for irrigation, although supplementary irrigation is required on the small portion of the farm (7%) planted on sandy Pinedene soils.

Kanonkop boasts some of the Cape's first commercially planted Pinotage vines, with an average age of over 50 years. These are maintained as traditional bush vines, with yields of approximately 6 tons per hectare. The Bordeaux varietals of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc are trellised into a five-wire hedge, with average yields of 4 tons per hectare.

The Kanonkop range is comprised of four distinct bottlings. Single varietal offerings are a rich, elegant Cabernet Sauvignon (which earned a rare, coveted 5 Star review in John Platter's authoritative South African Wine Guide in the 2003 vintage) and a legendary Pinotage, which serves as a benchmark for this unique and exotic South African grape. The "Kadette" Cape blend pairs the signature Pinotage with Bordeaux varietals, while the stylish and iconic "Paul Sauer" is a Cabernet-based Bordeaux blend crafted as a tribute to the proprietors' grandfather.

Respecting tradition while embracing the future, Kanonkop fuses age-old wine-making techniques with state-of-the art technology. All of the estate's grapes are hand picked and sorted, and the wines are vinified in open concrete fermenters with manual punchdowns, before aging in French Nevers oak barrels. A series of upgrades to the winery was recently completed, including the installation of cutting edge equipment in the cellar and laboratory and the construction of a brand new tasting room.

While the farm has a long history of quality red wine production, it was under the direction of longtime winemaker Beyers Truter that Kanonkop rose to elite status, garnering numerous accolades and tremendous international recognition. When Truter left to concentrate on his own label, he handed the winemaking reins to Stellenbosch graduate Abrie Beeslaar, who joined Kanonkop in 2002. The estate's wines are still as impressive as ever with the talented young Abrie at the helm, and so the proud tradition of excellence continues.



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