



Rudi Schultz was smitten with wine from an early age, but it was a yachting journey from the Cape to North Carolina via the Caribbean that got him hooked on the winemaking profession. During his seven month adventure on the seas, Schultz had the opportunity to taste a number of top notch Côte-Roties and Châteauneuf-du-Papes, as the yacht's owner was an avid collector of Rhône bottlings. This first encounter with world-class wines had a profound influence on him, prompting a desire to craft wines of the same caliber and style from his native land.

After earning a degree in oenology and viticulture at Elsenberg College of Agriculture in Stellenbosch, Schultz gained valuable practical experience during a harvest at Sonoma-Cutrer in the mid-1990s. He returned to the Cape with an understanding of cutting edge scientific and technological practices in winemaking, advances that South Africa had not yet discovered at that time. Schultz worked stints at several wine farms before being named winemaker at the prestigious Thelema Mountain Vineyards in 2001. Since then, he has been crafting world-class wines under the ever-watchful eye of Gyles Webb.

In 2002, Schultz traveled to France for the first time to visit the producers he aspired to emulate. He completed a harvest at Château-du-Joanny in the Southern Rhône, where he worked with Grenache, Syrah and Viognier. It was there that he became inspired to create his eponymous wine, and Syrah was naturally the varietal of choice. The unicorn depicted on the label is part of the coat of arms of Schultz's wife's family.

Grapes for the dazzling Rudi Schultz Syrah are sourced from a vineyard in the Bottelary Hills ward of Stellenbosch and vinified at Thelema. Hailed as a "small production gem" and a "delicious fruit-driven Syrah" that "maintain[s] a sense of freshness and minerality," the wine has earned a 90+ *Wine Spectator* rave in every vintage since its 2002 debut.

Winemaking runs in the Schultz family, as Rudi's older brother Carl and younger brother Gunther are also talented winemakers. When not crafting his award-winning, critically acclaimed wines, Schultz enjoys competitive mountain biking and surfing. He is also the proud father of a son and a daughter, possibly the next generation of Schultz winemakers!

