



RUSTENBERG WINES



RUSTENBERG IS ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S OLDEST AND MOST DISTINGUISHED WINE FARMS, WITH A VITICULTURAL HISTORY DATING BACK TO 1682.

In the early 1800s, owner Jacob Eksteen divided the estate, and the portion given to his son-in-law was named Schoongezicht. Both the Rustenberg and Schoongezicht farms were at their peak around 1812, with beautiful homesteads and flourishing vineyards. But by mid-century, the combination of recession and phylloxera in the vineyards led to bankruptcy, and the properties fell into a state of neglect.

In 1892, John X Merriman (who would later become Prime Minister of the Cape) purchased Schoongezicht, while his brother-in-law, Sir Jacob Barry, took over Rustenberg. Together, the pair revitalized the farms, replanting the vineyards on disease-resistant American rootstock and re-establishing the estates' winemaking tradition.

In 1941, Peter and Pamela Barlow bought the Rustenberg farm; they later acquired Schoongezicht and reunited the two properties. After taking control of the farm operations in 1987, their son Simon ushered in a new era, catapulting the historic estate to the ranks of South Africa's winemaking elite. The renaissance began with a large scale replanting of the vineyards using virus-free clones imported from France, followed by sweeping renovations to the winery and the hiring of new viticultural and winemaking teams. A small-scale nursery was also started, providing the farm with rootstock for upgrading, replanting and experimentation.

As *Wine Spectator* recently observed, "Rustenberg has all the qualifications of a world-class wine estate: a long history of winemaking...and ideal terroir, with deep-red, clay-rich granite soils that are located on a variety of slopes and elevations."

Rustenberg's vineyards are located at two distinct Stellenbosch sites. Grapes for the red wines are grown at the Rustenberg farm on the slopes of the Simonsberg. Highly acclaimed offerings include the estate's Bordeaux-inspired flagship, the elegant "John X Merriman," and the stunning single vineyard "Peter Barlow" Cabernet Sauvignon, created as a tribute to Simon's father.

Simon Barlow's cooler Nooitgedacht property, situated on the Helderberg overlooking False Bay, provides the perfect climate for producing fresh, mineral-tinged whites. In addition to a miniscule quantity of Roussanne, Rustenberg crafts some of South Africa's most heralded and sought-after Chardonnays: the Meursault-like estate bottling and the glorious Five Soldiers single vineyard offering, named for row of pine trees that stand guard at the vineyard entrance.

Rustenberg has earned tremendous critical and commercial success under the leadership of Simon Barlow, and the revolutionary changes he's implemented are just the beginning of this exciting chapter in the celebrated estate's history.

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