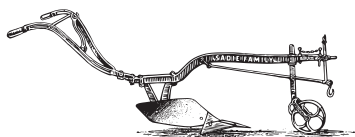




EBEN'S NOTES
RELEASE 2025



THE SADIE FAMILY WINES PTY LTD

EBEN'S NOTES

RELEASE 2025

RUNNING AT PACE.....

Since our last release, so much has transpired that it sometimes seems almost too scary to reflect on it all; time is flying by at a tremendous pace. We must make time to sit down, cook a decent meal, and have the good bottle of wine with the ones who matter most and more often.



The good news is that the construction of the new winery, bottling and labelling divisions, and offices has been finalized perfectly. We experienced a successful 2025 grape harvest without the wet concrete around us! The new facility has proven to be an absolute blessing. It has leapfrogged our ability to work with greater accuracy and speed. The climate challenges have meant that many producers' harvests have been compressed globally, and we are not indifferent. Our harvest, which used to be stretched out over 2 months, is now often done in a month to five weeks; thus, it requires incredible efficiency and logistical precision to enable all to be done on time.

We have also implemented compelling data-capturing and analytical platforms for the vineyards and the winery, and much input is required. It will help us build a comprehensive database over time and help us show areas of adjustment. Any data that is not processed is useless, and we can already start to read the golden threads that might have been lost in translation previously. Our plant pathology and propagation program will also undergo a complete makeover, and the new programs will be able to capture the magnitude of data. Many of the more recent varieties we have planted have yielded incredible results. We continuously push to plant the best material in better-positioned sites as we grow to new understanding. With technology skyrocketing in secular life, so does the world of agriculture, and one needs to run at full pace to keep up. It is exciting information that will only help us to grow into a better understanding of our beautiful subject.

THE 2024 VINTAGE, BRIEFLY.

We had an incredible winter that led into the 2024 vintage, and everything looked promising for one of the best vintages in years. So, we started the season with an astonishing water-filled soil capacity.

However, what transpired next also indicates what is experienced in many parts of the world... the rain simply stopped. From September 26th, 2023, until harvest, the vineyards had a marathon with no watering stations! It was a case of no backup rain, which only came by mid-May 2024 - seven and a half months later and only after harvest.

We significantly reduced our yields in the vineyard to lower the pressure on the vines and minimise stress on the overall system, as we do not irrigate. We did extensive mulching in the vineyards to retain moisture. Then we rolled cover crops, which also helped to reduce solar radiation and evapotranspiration of the soil. Regardless, it was a tough one overall.

Around harvest, we opted to pick several vineyards a couple of days earlier than in a normal year to try to preserve as much energy as possible for the vines and build reserves for the next year after harvest.

As a result, the wines show incredibly well at this stage, and we made some excellent decisions during harvest. The average level of ripeness for the harvest was 13.5% alcohol and fair to great acidity.



The general view of the 2024 wines is that they yielded great character, a massive volume of primary fruit, and linear textures. They do not possess the compact textures of the 2023 wines, but they are more elegant, and slightly more open and lifted, primarily resulting from opting to pick somewhat earlier.

We also observed lower sugar-to-alcohol conversions from the natural fermentations, as these may vary from year to year. This helped significantly in retaining elegance across the vintage, placing the wines in beautiful equilibrium. It is one of the mysteries of natural wine production. We have embarked on studying the various strains and species that conduct our fermentations from warm to cold years and dry to more regular vintages. Still, we could not find a silver thread; it is incredibly variable without an actual pattern. It is a relief that every year's microbiology belongs to that year and becomes part of the DNA of the very vintage expression.

In these more challenging years with the condition of the vines, general viticultural practices, and the timing of actions in the vineyard manifest and become the watershed between excellent and satisfactory results.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE TABLE

When we started in 1999, we embarked on producing only one wine, Columella. Clearly, 26 years later, with 11 wines, we have landed on a completely different path. As time went on, through better learning and the growth of a deeper understanding, we realised that the terroir and its notion wanted to express a completely different storyline.

The Swartland, with the largest surface area of any wine region in South Africa, has a bigger story to tell, one of greater diversity.

One nightmare in any domain producing wine is having an overly extended range of wines, but we have found ourselves at this junction where we are now introducing two more wines. However, it is for sound reasons with a future-oriented philosophy.

Around 20 years ago, we became involved with the South African plant improvement scheme and started investigating new varieties for South Africa.

The main reason is that the realization of this vast place cannot be represented in all its differences by a small number of trending grape varieties that have become commercial stamps. Secondly, the question of climate change will require new varieties in the future that are better adapted to the realities of future climates. Finally, we recognize that there are grape varieties out there in the world that could be better adapted to carry the signature of our terroir and climate to the bottle. Essentially, better ambassadors in their ability to transport a sense of place.

So, we started with the laborious and time-consuming process of importing material via long quarantine processes for massal selections and clonal material. The plant improvement scheme provided us with the first use of some of the imported material. In other cases, old massal selections were propagated through their tissue culture via the in vitro culture process, which is used to obtain disease-free plants by propagating cellular material from a given growth tip of a plant before the contracted virus infects the growth tip. There were many hit-and-miss attempts, significant triumphs, and major disasters.

The singular aim was to plant the biggest potential genius of varietals, but completely virus-free for the future. After planting, the most critical second step is a plant pathology program that monitors and tests the material, implementing all measures to ensure the material remains virus-free. It is a daily battle that becomes part of a lifestyle.

For comparison, most of the material was planted in the Paardeberg on weathered granite and the coastal stretch of St. Helena Bay on mainly limestone-based soils.

The varietals are co-planted in the vineyards but in rows, as we need to monitor the individual varieties. We also need the varietals in rows, as this material will serve as future nursery material for us and some other industry partners. Additionally, we have micro-vinified these varietals for several years to learn about them and their characteristics in our terroir. We plan to plant these varietals mixed in future vineyard plantings.

The two best-positioned vineyards from all these years of inputs have now made their way to the bottle.

T W I S W I N D

Translated, Twiswind means “Argue Wind” or “to argue with the wind”, as the parcel of vines is planted in our most wind-affected area in the Paardeberg. The wind has led to much stunted growth in the vineyard and has helped us, in part, get these young vines to an excellent equilibrium of growth, early on.



Twiswind is a co-planted block of Vermentino, Piquepoul, Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Cinsaut Blanc, Palomino, Chenin Blanc, Grillo, Assyrtiko, Verdelho, Clairette Blanche & Semillon.

At this stage, the vineyard is harvested in two stages, and the two components are fermented in an old wooden cask (first pick) and a concrete tank (second pick). The future goal is to pick the entire vineyard in a single harvest. We have managed trials to observe various pruning

techniques and pruning timing, as well as the resultant ripening dates, to see if we can pull the ripening cycles across all the varieties closer to one another. We have also observed that initially, in its youth, the vines developed unevenly; however, with time, they have grown significantly in their root systems, leading to the varieties ripening closer to a given date. We will get this worked out sooner rather than later. The idea, however, is not to pick all varieties at the same ripeness level, either as a point of departure, but at least to have them in a ripening bracket that makes vinous sense.

This vintage was the third edition from this vineyard, and we can see a consistent quality and result. The vineyard has a strong individuality and a story that needs to be told.

SONVANG

Translated, Sonvang means “Sun Catch”, and the name was given to this west-facing vineyard because it soaks up all the afternoon setting sun.

By definition, it is a warmer site. Historically, late-ripening sites were associated with being the better-quality, yielding locations in colder climates. On the contrary, we have learned that the red grape varieties, especially in warm climates benefit from earlier ripening. It is possible to pick the fruit with most of the natural acidity, and in some cases it can be even better if the harvest happens before many heatwaves that may arrive. Sonvang is a vineyard that does precisely that.



The vineyard is planted to Alicante Bouchet, Agiorgitiko, Pontac, Bastardo do Castello, Tinta Amarella, Tinta Barocca, Lleudoner Pelut, Grenache Noir, Pinotage, Cinsaut, Cunoise and Carignan.

Like Twiswind's current reality, we mainly have two harvests at this stage, with the long-term objective of the entire vineyard in one go.

The two pickings are fermented in concrete and pressed into an old foudre and a concrete tank where the wine is aged for fourteen months before bottling.

The vineyard's character is already incredibly unique and original, nothing compared to what has been before and a story that needs to be told.

A final note on both wines, their philosophy and existence;

Our Signature wines, Columella and Palladius, are regional wines with the singular objective of reflecting what this Swartland is about. In doing so, we need to pick the most significant diversity of varieties and soil types that make up the Swartland to at least have a shot at it.

Twiswind and Sonvang are two vineyards in a specific location with a varietal departure that best addresses the current climatic and environmental realities, but with a better-positioned mechanism and more future-proof genetics. We are not only married to the current varietal standing that makes up each of these vineyards, but we already plan to replant some sections in the vineyards with new prospective plant material, and we will keep doing so.

In 1887, 'T Voetpad was planted firstly to Muscat d' Alexandrie, and a couple of years later they added Palomino, Semillon Blanc & Semillon Gris. In 1928 they added Chenin Blanc and more recently, with the drought, we interplanted more Semillon and Palomino where vines have died. And so, the vineyard continues to evolve and adapt.

Twiswind and Sonvang are two young co-planted "T Voetpad"-type vineyards of a much bigger varietal standing at the point of departure. The idea is to keep trimming and adjusting until they reach the best potential outcome with an ever-changing climate and growth in understanding of a place. We want to take everyone on this journey with us.

We never spoke to the man who planted 'T Voetpad, nor do we think he ever could foresee what would become of the vineyard. We farmers plant, for that is what we do, even if it's against all the odds.

We hope most of our very valued members at least get their hands on one or more of these bottles.

PALLADIUS COMING OF AGE

In recent years, we have focused heavily on developing Palladius, our regional white wine. The main objectives were to be more finite regarding vineyard composition and site-specific management of every vineyard that makes up this complex wine and to build greater refinement in the wine's two-year ageing in amphora, concrete, and casks.



This year, during our annual review of all the wines, it was the clear standout wine in the tasting, and we finally felt like we were getting there.

It is the most complex wine to grow, with many vineyards and variables during vinification and ageing. We are still learning a great deal.

It is very easy to latch onto and identify with a specific single vineyard. In contrast, Palladius posts such a myriad of dynamics that it is often intimidating, even to those of us who live daily with this wine.

FUTURE VINTAGE PROJECT

Hopefully, by the end of this year or early next year, we will compile a list of our older vintages available to our members and visitors.

The idea of the list is to have older vintages of our wines available in limited quantities to prospective “drinkers”. Not to traders, grey marketeers, nor speculators, but “drinkers”.



It just irks us that some members, visitors, or people who follow our wine are extorted into the market at crazy prices, especially on older vintages.

Our older vintages are more valuable but must be drunk rather than traded. We will also devote considerable effort to getting the wines listed in restaurants across South Africa, but with capped ceiling pricing to again prevent greed from taking the place of “drinking.”

We want to thank everyone for their continued support and for what we were entrusted with. May 2025 be a year of new horizons.

Below is a short overview of the wines for release.

THE SIGNATURES

2023 VINTAGE

Columella

2023

This 2023 Columella vintage displays strawberry aromas transitioning to dark cherry and floral perfumed aromatics.

Over time, the trademark violets and perfumes will develop further; the wine is very compact.

This 2023 is slightly firmer and grippier than the 2022 vintage and presents itself as a deeper-centred wine. Its tannin dynamics are similar to those of the 2019 vintage.

The wine needs time.

PALLADIUS

2023

In 2023, Palladius displays an incredibly bright colour for a wine from 24 months of ageing. The inclusion of more acidic and lower alcohol-driven varieties has contributed much to the increased freshness of the resulting wine. This vintage displays a lime zesty and green apple entry of aromatics and a line of salinity that stretches throughout. On the palate, the tannins present themselves incredibly refined and balanced, intertwined with fresh acidity and a long-lasting aftertaste. Potentially, the wine of the vintage!

DISTRICT SERIES

2024 VINTAGE

SOLDAAT

2024

This 2024 Soldaat displays the usual red cherry, unripe strawberry, and pomegranate fruit aromas. The wine is incredibly transparent and pure in aroma. This year, there are shades of rose petals and perfumes. The palate is marked by softer tannins than usual, which meet sweet, grippy, powdery tannins with a long finish. The entire wine is an exhibition of elegance.

POFADDER

2024

The 2024 Pofadder is incredibly fruit-forward from the get-go and displays bright red fruit aromas with some oriental spicy herbal aromas. The fruit carries over into ripe strawberry aspects that follow through onto the palate. The tannins are softer than usual and exceptionally well balanced early in the wine's life. The wine is swift and a standout in recent vintages.

TREINSPOOR

2024

This 2024 Treinspoor starts out with some darker graphite and dried fig aromas, transcending into violets and perfumes that transform into pencil lead aromas. It is one of the most lifted versions, and the purple hue also suggests a new definition of Tinta Barocca, or at least for us. The tannins are multi-layered and dense with a firm finish. This is an absolute block of a wine with a lingering forever taste. Please afford this wine time.

SONVANG

2024

This maiden 2024 Sonvang vintage displays Mediterranean rosemary and herbal aromas, tangled with bright red fruit. The wine is youthful and embryonic and hosts a slight perfect reduction that will carry it into the future. The powdery and firm tannins have class and elegance and are knotted and stitched together with the acidity to produce enormous length to the wine. This wine needs time, and we are delighted with this maiden release.

DISTRICT SERIES

2024 VINTAGE

SKERPIOEN

2024

The 2024 Skerpioen displays peach and citrus flavours and a touch of tropical aspects, migrating to the trademark salty brine characteristics associated with this vineyard. This 2024 vintage has a slightly lower acidity than usual, and the aromatics suggest it can be enjoyed earlier. The Skerpioen is one of our white wines that are the first to be ready for enjoyment in our range of whites.

'T VOETPAD

2024

This 2024 'T Voetpad displays pale straw and lanolin aromatic aspects with limey yeast aromas that meander to fresh baled straw bales. The significance of this vineyard is that, regardless of the many varietals co-planted, the wine presents itself as very balanced with immense tannin and a grippy, fresh finish. The wine is fresh and will carry well into the future.

TWISWIND

2024

This maiden 2024 Twiswind vintage displays limey and zesty dynamics with fresh Granny Smith apple and peach skin aromas. The intense palate and textural aspects somehow dwarf the aromatics, as the wine is built up from the structural mouthfeel and tension of tannins. The acidity is firm, and this wine needs time.

KOKERBOOM

2024

2024 Kokerboom displays the typical waxy, lanolin characters often associated with Semillon, but this year, the aromatics also have a gingery, spicy aspect, with some tropical granadilla undertones. On the mouth, the tannins and phenolics seem to be some of the most refined and elegant we have tasted from this vineyard. Overall, it is a very fresh version of this vineyard.

DISTRICT SERIES

2024 VINTAGE

SKURFBERG

2024

This 2024 Skurfberg vintage displays some riper tropical fruit alongside the usual Granny Smith apple fresh greener flavours. This vintage however, has some viscosity to it, balanced by a very bright and long acidity finish. This is a more linear version of the vineyard expression, and the wine should fill out with time in the bottle.

ROTSBANK

2024

This 2024 Rotsbank bottling displays gunflint and seaweed aromas with tropical granadilla secondary flavours. There is a line of green tea, and the tannin dries out at the end of the palate. This year is marked by incredible length and elegance on the palate.

It is one of the wines that can be slightly reduced and shy on release, and we recommend that the wine be allowed to aerate if opened early.

It is a very linear and firm style of Chenin.

MEV. KIRSTEN

2024

The 2024 Mev. Kirsten starts in the glass with some fuller, exotic tropical fruits and spicy herbal aspects. Only after some time in the glass do the greener apple and olive characters start showing, and the wine becomes a complex cocktail of two dynamics, namely weight and power, but swift at the same time. The acidity in this 2024 vintage is fresher than usual, and it is an absolute textbook vintage for this vineyard.