OLDENBURG
VINEYARDS

Stone Axe 2023

RONDEKOP SERIES

COMPOSITION	96% Syrah, 4% Grenache
HARVEST	15 February - 3 March 2023 at 24.1° Balling
TECHNICAL DATA	Alc 14.53% | RS 1.9g/L | TA 6g/L | pH 3.37
MATURATION	18 months in 13% new 225L French oak barrels
PRODUCTION	1533 cases of 6 | 300 magnums

Our Rondekop series of wines represent a small selection of the best barrels—either a single cultivar or a blend—from our iconic Rondekop. We believe there are 8 Natural Elements that uniquely impact our vineyards, creating quintessential wine-producing conditions. At its centre is our perfectly round hill, Rondekop, the 8th natural element.

Several stone axes found on Rondekop date back to the early Stone Age, at least 100,000 years ago. Knowing that early humans lived and hunted on this hill adds to the mystical nature of our valley, and it is here that we planted our Syrah.

WINEMAKING / MATURATION

The grapes were hand-harvested into small lug boxes and cooled overnight, then bunch sorted and destemmed before being pumped gently into stainless steel tanks. With 13% whole-bunch inclusion, the wine fermented spontaneously with indigenous yeast, with pump-overs 1–3 times daily. Malolactic conversion took place in barrel. The wine was matured for 18 months in 225L French oak barrels (13% new), and the components were barrel selected and blended three months before bottling. It was bottled unfined and unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

Deep royal purple in the glass, this is Côte-Rôtie meets Barossa, pairing savoury spice with generous fruit concentration. Black plums, blackberry and bramble abound on the nose, with violets, lavender, white pepper and a touch of smoky cedar. The palate is full-bodied and expressive, with peppery rotundone spice layered over vibrant red and black berry fruit, while clove, liquorice and baking spice add savoury complexity. Excellent depth leads to a long, juicy finish. Approachable now, it benefits from decanting to soften the tannins, and will mature beautifully for another 10–15 years.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

The 2023 season got off to a good start, with ideal daytime temperatures and even shoot growth. Véraison came earlier than the year before, pointing to an early harvest, but cool ripening conditions slowed things down and the first half of harvest ran smoothly. Grape analyses showed low pH and high organic acids, a promising sign for quality. Rain brought challenges, but careful canopy management and well-timed picking kept the fruit in great shape. The result is a vintage with great structure and a marked focus on elegance.

Tasted by Delaille Graham

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