

# Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2017

**RANGE:** SMUGGLERS BOOT - An innovative range that pays tribute to the ingenuity of winemakers past and present.

**VARIETAL INFORMATION:** 50% Sauvignon Blanc, 50% Semillon.

**WINE OF ORIGIN:** Western Cape, South Africa

**HISTORY:** In 2014, The Smuggler's Boot wines were first released. The name derives from the time of trade embargoes in South Africa when growers & winemakers smuggled grapevine material into the country by hiding the cuttings in Wellington boots. The Smuggler's Boot range celebrates that ingenuity.

**VINTAGE:** Hand-Picking Dates: Sauvignon Blanc: 7th February to 9th March (Elgin)  
24th February to 14th March (Elgin)  
Semillon: 21st February to 13th March 2017  
Brix at Harvest: Sauvignon Blanc: 21 to 24.1 Semillon: 21.60 to 24.20

**SEASON:** A cool winter in 2017 enabled good vine dormancy but the rainfall was low and followed similar conditions felt in 2015 and 2016. Budbreak took place in ideal warm sunny conditions whilst flowering was a touch earlier than normal; strong blustery winds meant pollination took longer to complete. As a result, berry set was uneven leading to some smaller berries that, despite a lower yield, had good concentration of flavours. Despite expecting an early harvest, an unusually cool December slowed down ripening whilst some January rain during veraison helped nourish the soils and more importantly, helped the vine focus on grape ripening rather than foliage and root growth. Harvest took place under blue skies in February and through to early March. The net result is the wines achieved steady phenolic ripeness, have respectable natural acidity and the drier year has given plenty of intense fruit flavours.

**WINEMAKING:** Grapes were hand picked into small lug baskets. The Sauvignon Blanc was whole bunch pressed using a light sparkling wine pressing cycle before going to tank for 2 days of cold settling. After racking off the clean juice a small amount of light fluffy lees was added back and the wine inoculated using a mix of yeasts. Meanwhile the Semillon grapes were destemmed and crushed before being gently pressed into a stainless steel tank. Natural fermentation started (with no yeasts added) and after 2 days the fermenting Semillon juice was racked into oak barrels, of which 2/3rds were new and the 1/3rd had only been used previously for 4 months. The Sauvignon Blanc was fermented cool, between 12-14°C enabling a long, cool ferment so as to preserve all the delicate volatiles that exist in the must. The Semillon fermented between 15-20°C to allow better oak integration and allow some of the norisoprenoids to release. A light sulphuring followed to stop malolactic and the lees was stirred using heavy dry ice blocks on the Sauvignon Blanc tanks and a batonnage rod for the Semillon. All together the wine stayed on its lees for around 4 months after which the batches were individually tasted and blended together with a light fining and bottled.

**TASTING PROFILE:** Light lotus yellow green in colour, the nose has pristine aromas of elderflower, Meyer lemon and mandarin segments. A clean, seamless palate with vibrant fruit definition balanced with a taut natural acidity, this linear structured wine unfurls to lime, rose and Forelle pear softened by a creamy texture and lingers long after the first sip. A classic white Bordeaux-style wine

**FOOD PAIRING:** Its fresh, citrus profile and mineral texture makes it perfect with seafood dishes, fish and spring vegetables. Richard enjoys it with tuna sashimi with a delicate lime and ginger or Asian dipping sauce; Oysters (Walvis Bay here are fab); asparagus and peas in a pasta primavera work well or goats cheese, white asparagus and chorizo (lightly spiced) pizza. Alternatively, a 'posh' fie pie or poached salmon with peas and frothy hollandaise (not too heavy on the butter). Cod and chips, or beer battered haddock. For meat lovers, Gammon on the bone with broad beans in a parsley sauce. A light Thai green curry with pork or chicken (but go easy on the curry spice).

