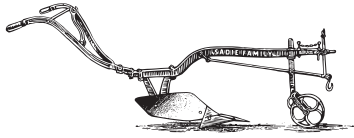


EBEN'S NOTES
RELEASE 2026





THE SADIE FAMILY WINES PTY LTD

EBEN'S NOTES

RELEASE 2026

2025 - EVERYTHING COMING TOGETHER.....

In the past year, it has been so busy it is hard to work through the diary and reflect on everything that has transpired, be it good or bad at times, but much has happened for the better.

Last year at this time, we co-hosted the Back to the Swartland Revolution, an anniversary event marking 10 years since the last one. It was a marvelous event with incredible moments to be had, some good wines, music, food and unforgettable conversation from people of all walks of life.

Soon after the event, the first rains were settling in, and it was time to get the cover crops into the ground, and we started our next year in the vineyards, and with that, we brought a close to the 2025 vintage.

The 2025 vintage, by and large, is seen as one of the all-time great national vintages; it not only produced the most incredible wines in the Swartland region but also in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, Constantia, Stellenbosch, Robertson, and other regions. It goes without fail, and it will become for a long time the measure of any vintage that follows.



Rolled Cover Crops, Pruned Vines and Spring in Motion.

So, what made this vintage so extraordinary? We started with an incredible winter, and the rainfall not only measured up to and exceeded averages across our region, but the frequency and intensity of the rains also meant that our soil profiles were completely saturated. The winter lasted longer, and we had late rains into spring, which meant we could carry much more water reserves into our growing season.

Cover crops grew incredibly well, and we had late snow on the Hawequa Mountains and across the Boland region, which brought unbelievably cold units that were pivotal in pulling the vines into proper rest and preserving reserves.



The budding and the growth of the vines were uneven at the start, but then everything caught up well, and at the time of the flowering of the fruit, the table was set. Then we also experienced one of our lowest wind-strength days, and that, in part, meant we lost much less water capacity through evaporation of soil moisture and leaf moisture, leaving the reserve well looked after. The lower wind days did, however, lead to slightly higher disease pressure with the built-in humidity, but other than a light breakout of downy mildew that we treated with copper and metabolites, the rest of the season ran like a dream.

Fruit set was incredible, and even at veraison, suggesting uniform ripening in the later season, and the mild temperatures carried on through December, with the only exception being a massive two-day sting over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Temperatures shot up to 43 degrees, and we experienced early sunburn badly in the Treinspoor vineyard and one of our Carignan vineyards, but the rest were at a point of maturation where it had no effect, and everything restored well into the new year.

The first day of picking was the 21st of January, with harvest ending on the 5th of March 2025. The fruit throughout the entire season was picked and just beamed excellence and quality.

The wine from 2025 characteristically speaks of a different class, poise and confidence throughout.



VINE HEALTH AND PHYTOSANITARY DEVELOPMENT

The last 10 years have been extremely busy on our viticultural front, not only in terms of our own developments and plantings but also the developments on our growers' properties in the Swartland and Citrusdal Mountains.

It is all good and well to establish vineyards, and interplant vineyards and get them to equilibrium and soil health and structurally pruned and developed, but the detail resides in terms of the actual individual vine health.

Globally, there is a range of health issues threatening vines, and the biggest threat is actual commercial considerations for most growers to uproot their vines every 20 years and replant to boost yields. They then have little bearing for the planted quality of the young vines and the actual planting techniques and preparations, for they know in advance that, irrespective of the time, they will replace the vineyard in 20 years' time. The issue with this orientation is that the very site never settles into the elevated balance and complexity of wines that older vines bring.

We therefore take great care with the magnitude of considerations and inputs in developing a new vineyard, but the biggest work truly presents itself once the vineyard is established: maintaining the condition, ultimately to mitigate degradation over time and establish the average age of the healthiest vines across the site. Plant to age!



We are blessed in South Africa, for we still do not have the worst of realities, as is the case in some of the very historic vine-growing areas of the world. Within the South African context, grapevine leafroll disease is widely accepted to be the most damaging grapevine virus disease. The primary vector for Grapevine leafroll - associated virus 3 (GLRaV-3) is the mealybug (*Planococcus ficus*). The spread of this virus is severely exacerbated by ants, which protect the mealybugs from natural predators in exchange for honeydew that the mealybug supply as a payoff.

The spread of a systemic virus is influenced by the direction of the carbohydrate movement in the phloem. The sieve elements are blocked and ruptured in the parenchyma cells in the leaves which will result in a delay of the carbohydrate translocation.

Many growers continue to produce wine of substandard quality as it does not kill the vine instantly and can linger in the vines for decades merely resulting in lesser wine quality.



In terms of our counter-defence, we work with an entomologist/insectologist and a company that breeds insects to eradicate mealybugs, and we conduct multiple releases of various species over the course of a growing season. The main insects we release are Perminutus, Cryptolaemus and Anagyrus.

We can also spray the mealybugs with natural neem oil if there is a breakout, but the preventative insect program is the main line of attack and defence.



In conjunction with this we have embarked on a project of incredible magnitude that simply is not done, but seeing that we have low vine densities per hectare we calculated that we can with massive effort test the individual virus status of every vine and we have started the process of individually sampling four leaf petioles per plant and an extensive individual vine numbering system and a database. The current plan is to get through all vine parcels every 5 years and to schedule the removal of potentially infected vines and interplanting.

Often, inspection is done visually, but hardwood testing picks it up at a very early stage of development.

We have initiated the program, and we are confident that the long-term results will be the growth of older, interplanted high-average-age vineyards.

It comes down to not tending vines that, in any event, cannot go the distance of time.

In 2021, we bought a neighbouring property in the Paardeberg and consolidated it with the existing property. We uprooted most of the existing vines because they were low-quality; we kept the best vineyards and have been working to restore the soil. We are currently working on the layout and development planning to plant vacant parcels in 2028. It is incredible soil and will enable us to continue developing new varietal plantings and, in the future, to address the climate and viticultural challenges we anticipate.

Currently, we have 22 hectares planted on our home property, and we are managing another 24 hectares on agreements across the Swartland and Citrusdal Mountains. We annually harvest around 120 tons for the winery; the residual fruit and some specific parcels we farm for other winemakers and their projects. All of this has enabled us to establish the necessary infrastructure and teams to get the job done properly. We are 42 people strong, and we have enough hands to truly farm the vineyards with the timing and precision required.

We are blessed to live in this wonderful country with magnificent people of many different walks of life.



This year, again, was the top-up of our compost program (feed those that feed you), and we are currently spreading compost and are busy with our seedbed development for this year's cover crop program.

We pray for good rains, and hopefully, with that in hand, we may start the new season in the vineyards and build on from that into 2027.

So much development has taken place, and we will use the remainder of 2026 to consolidate. The general focus for this year is our human resource development program and protégé program.

THE WINES IN A NUTSHELL

The 2025 vintage, as a base notion, is simply nature playing out a perfect year. A rare reality in the agricultural landscape, but enough to keep us believing fair-weather sailing is possible. The wines are slightly more restrained and simply speak of classic aspects. Not too much of anything, but ever-present.



DISTRICT SERIES

2025 VINTAGE

SOLDAAT

2025

The 2025 Soldaat departs with a slight reduction. We opted not to intervene and bottled the wine with the reduction, as it often locks up extended ageing potential in the bottle. It blows off with a couple of swirls in the glass, and we recommend decantation. This Soldaat bottling on the numbers is incredible, and the usual red cherry and pomegranate fruit aromas are ever-present, carrying over to the palate, where they are met with fresh acidity. The wine is complex and honestly needs time in the bottle.

POFADDER

2025

This 2025 Pofadder is potentially one of our best bottlings ever. The wine displays the usual strawberry-red fruit flavours, but then secondary spicy, peppery, and aromatic notes, along with violets, fill the glass, and all this carries into the wine's mouthfeel, building into an incredible, complex bottling from this site. We are delighted with the wine. Also, a slight early bottling reduction is in play.

TREINSPoor

2025

Fifteen years on and a great vintage later, we finally managed to produce the wine we believed we could achieve with this vineyard and variety. It was also our smallest harvest ever from this vineyard. The earthy, graphite aromas extend into cedarwood and lead-pencil aromatics, coated by ripe plum and purple-fruit aromas. This wine just sits at the perfect level of ripeness and definition.



DISTRICT SERIES

2025 VINTAGE

SONVANG

2025

This vintage of Sonvang displays the customary Mediterranean and oriental spicy aromatic profile, with earthy and spicy notes. This vineyard has a very strong vineyard character and identity, and the wine is very distinct and true to place. The wine has some nervous tannins that will mellow over time, and it simply needs a bit of a cool, dark cellar. If you love the nervous aspects and length of some Italian wines, then this is straight up your alley; it has a big game mentality.

SKERPIOEN

2025

The 2025 Skerpioen displays more lemon-zest and honeysuckle notes that spill over into the habitual saline qualities of this vineyard. This vintage is extremely linear and focused, and a slightly more restrained version with finesse.

Go find some oysters!

'T VOETPAD

2025

This vintage in Voetpad starts off by showing more of the waxy lanolin aromatics associated with Semillon, then bends into more tropical aspects associated with Chenin Blanc, wrapped in earthier characteristics and an almost sandalwood scent on the aromatic backdrop. The strawbale/hay characteristic that is synonymous with the vineyard is also present. The tannins in this 2025 vintage are very compact, yet refined and delicate. It needs some time in the bottle.

TWISWIND

2025

This is the second bottling of Twiswind, and this 2025 version displays wonderful balance throughout. It is ironic, as it is a twelve-varietal wine, and one would expect a more disjointed departure, but it all sits in the most profound merger of a singular site. The vineyard displays its signature green-apple fruit character, which then spills over into more tropical, expanded aromas. The palate has a lemony, creamy, and toasty texture wrapped in firm tannins that simply pull it all together and into place.

DISTRICT SERIES

2025 VINTAGE

KOKERBOOM

2025

The 2025 Kokerboom displays the waxy, lanolin-like characteristics generally associated with Semillon, with an underlying sliver of gunflint reduction that quickly dissipates, followed by the customary Granny Smith apple and limey aromas. The acidity in this vineyard in 2025, combined with firm tannins, makes for a mouthfeel that is compact and textured, and in need of some time; it is a full wine.

SKURFBERG

2025

In 2025, Skurfberg ripening led to a wine that displays a more grounded mineral expression with very fine aromatics of stone fruit, riper pears and unripe passion fruit that merge into a waxy coating. The palate has very savoury tannins, firm acidity, and a very long, lingering aftertaste. The site is simply so true to itself.

ROTSBANK

2025

This 2025 Rotsbank is fast out of the gates, with intense mineral, salty, and gunflint characteristics, less reduction than usual, yet still very linear, with the signature “blue steel” orientation of Chenin. It is a very concentrated version with more viscosity than usual but still restrained and not over the top. The wine needs some space in the glass.

MEV. KIRSTEN

2025

The 2025 Mev. Kirsten, from the outset, showed more tropical, passion-fruit, and pear-skin aromas, but it is underwritten by fresher, greener apple and limey aspects. Very extroverted on the nose but then turns inward and becomes more restrained; the biggest advantage of this wine is the massive tannin-acidity combination that just holds this structure in suspended air. This vintage is a true “grande dame” version of the site.

THE SIGNATURES

2024 VINTAGE

Columella

2024

This 2024 Columella shows the customary Mediterranean spicy herbal aromas, with peppery notes and violet accents. It has a lot of fresh red fruit, mulberry, and graphite aromas, along with some dried figs. On the palate the wine displays chalky firm tannins. We believe it is some of the best and most complex tannins we have managed to capture in Columella. The tannins and mouthfeel have been our absolute focus for the past eight years, and we have spent much time studying the various post-fermentation extraction points and pressing dates.

PALLADIUS

2024

Last year, we highlighted the coming-of-age journey of Palladius over the past 25 years. This 2024 vintage again displays very fresh lemon-zest and nectarine characteristics, with some suppressed grapefruit aromas, all coated in salinity. The wine is restrained and elegant throughout, yet it holds massive weight and length.

Steal if you need to, but get to taste this wine, it speaks volumes of the Swartland and its magnificence.



Thank you for your valued support. Be sure to share your wines with those who matter most, and don't forget to make a new friend along the way.