



THE OLD VINE PROJECT THE STORY

Old vines are a phenomenon that has captured the attention of the global wine world. Wines that are made from old vines are a tribute to the grower's love of his or her land. They exist because of the people who touched and tended them over many years. In South Africa, producers can certify old vine vineyards and wines with the Old Vine Project (OVP).

South Africa has the advantage that our vineyard plant dates can be verified by the South African Wine Industry Information Systems (SAWIS) back to 1900. This extraordinary database has been instrumental in the existence of the OVP and its guarantee of traceability.

Members of the OVP apply for the Certified Heritage Vineyards seal for wine made from vineyards of 35 years or older, together with the planting date. This is a guarantee to the consumer of authentic wines made according to the OVP viticultural and winemaking guidelines.

The journey to document South Africa's old vines was started in 2002 by vineyard manager, Rosa Kruger. The OVP was formalised in 2016 with seed funding from the Rupert Foundation. Today, with traction gained and awareness spreading, more wines are being launched to augment the OVP's footprint.

> 35 years

CERTIFIED HERITAGE VINEYARDS MINIMUM AGE 130

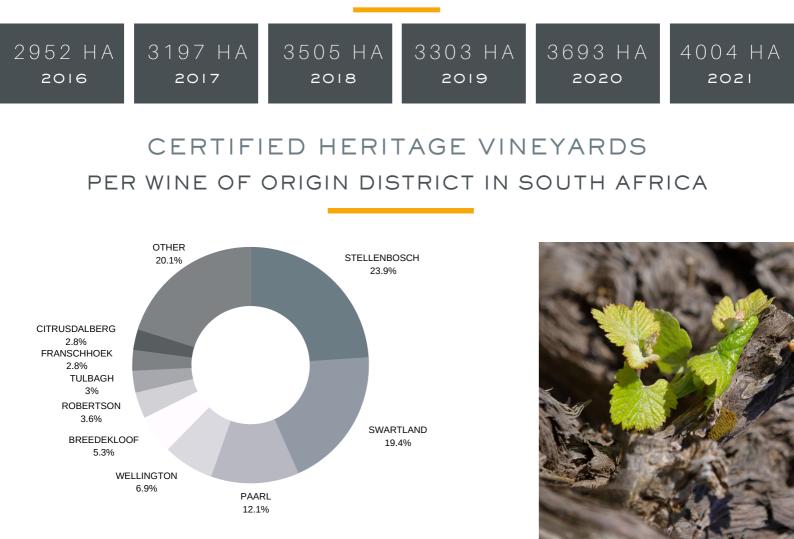
OLD VINE PROJECT MEMBERS

> 250

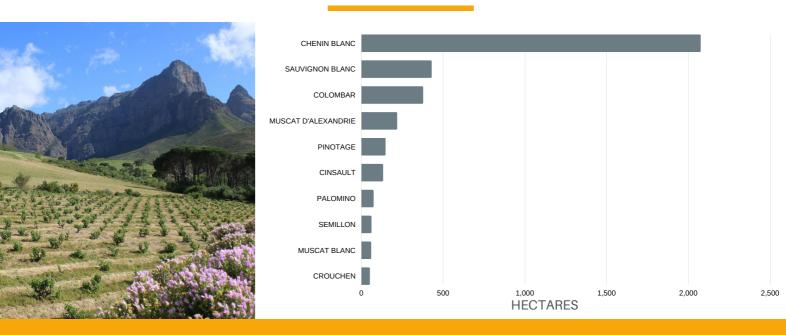
CERTIFIED HERITAGE VINEYARD WINES REGISTERED PER YEAR

"IT'S NO SURPRISE TO ME THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF MY WINES AND WINEMAKERS OF THE YEAR HAVE AN OLD VINE CONNECTION, CONFIRMING HOW VITAL THE OLD VINE PROJECT IS TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN WINE INDUSTRY AND WHY THE COUNTRY'S HERITAGE VINEYARDS ARE SO UNIQUE." - TIM ATKIN, MASTER OF WINE

CERTIFIED HERITAGE VINEYARDS HECTARES IN SOUTH AFRICA



TOP IO MOST WIDELY PLANTED CULTIVARS OLD VINES IN SOUTH AFRICA



INFORMATION SOURCED FROM SAWIS, 2022

CERTIFIED HERITAGE VINEYARDS THE SEAL

As a world-first, the Certified Heritage Vineyard seal certifies the plant date of a vineyard from which a wine is made. In a time when consumers are constantly seeking more knowledge and transparency on products, this guarantees authentic wines made according to the OVP viticultural and winemaking guidelines.



TRACEABILITY EXCLUSIVITY PRODUCT INTEGRITY RARITY AND DESIRABILITY QUALITY DIFFERENTIATION

OLD VINE PRUNING EDUCATION

Approximately 4% of vineyards qualify for Certified Heritage Vineyards status in South Africa. Older vineyards tend to bear less fruit, thus the financial viability per hectare is a key challenge for growers. The secret to enhanced yields lies in the skill and knowledge of the viticulturist, and the workforce who care for and prune the vineyards. The foundation of a great wine always starts in the vineyard. The talent, skill, knowledge, and attitude of pruners can determine the longevity of the vineyard, as well as influence the yield.



FELCO Africa, Imvini Wethu and the OVP designed a specialised pruning training course to motivate, empower and share knowledge on how to treat and prune old vines with care and respect. Pruners are trained in enhanced pruning skills so that they can appreciate the importance and context of their role in the winemaking process. Their contribution has a direct and significant impact on the overall quality of the final product. Knowledge, ideas and experiences are shared between groups of pruners, providing an information base that continues to grow. This training, provided by the OVP along with FELCO, has provided social and environmental upliftment by creating a positive economic impact on the South African wine industry. Pruning is an artisanship that shapes the longevity of the vineyard and the quality of the wine.





PRUNING IS AN ARTISANSHIP THAT SHAPES THE LONGEVITY OF THE VINEYARD AND THE QUALITY OF THE WINE.

FOR AN OVERVIEW, PLEASE VIEW THE VIDEO HERE.

OLD VINE RESEARCH DISCOVERIES

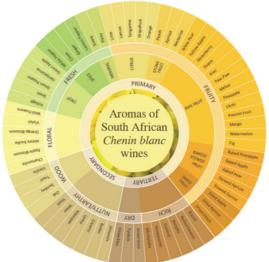
"OLD VINES ARE A WONDERFUL SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF PLANTS AND THE AGEING PROCESS OF VINES, ESPECIALLY IN THIS CHALLENGING TIME OF CLIMATE CHANGE."

ROSA KRUGER

Since 2008, Vititec, in partnership with the OVP, started to collect cuttings of South Africa's best old vine vineyards with the goal to develop clean plant material from these old vines. About 20 different blocks were identified, cuttings were taken and material from 11 blocks was cleaned of all known viruses. These vines, that are presently available to propagate, are referred to as 'heritage selections'.

After tasting old vine Chenin Blanc from South Africa, the InterLoire realised the unique attributes of these old vines. The InterLoire took plant material of what they viewed to be the best Chenin Blanc blocks and vines in South Africa, and discovered that South Africa has Chenin Blanc selections that are extinct in France. The goal now is to safeguard this gene pool in their clonal garden in France.

The chemical profiling of the 'old vine' sensory character of Chenin Blanc wines has taken an important step forward in a collaborative effort between the Department of Chemistry and the Institute for Wine Biotechnology at Stellenbosch University (SU), the Chenin Blanc Association and private cellars. Clear differentiation between 'old vine' Chenin Blanc wines and those produced from younger vines was demonstrated, and the individual volatile compounds responsible for the differences are being identified. The 'Aroma of South African Chenin Blanc Wines' wheel was updated to include the new aromas and mouthfeel attributes.



Research to investigate possible genetic influences on improved wine quality in old Pinotage vines has also been conducted by Professor Johan Burger at SU. His team compared both gene expression levels and total microbiomes in old (53 years) and young (seven years) Pinotage vines, inter-planted in the same commercial vineyard. Results show a significant difference in the grapes and juice of young vines compared to older vines, with older vines having significantly higher acid at a lower Balling, thus a lower alcohol and better pH.

Some of the most exciting new wines in South Africa have come from noble old vines, the fruit from which had mostly been disappearing into huge anonymous tanks, the farmers receiving little reward for the low yields. Research undertaken in collaboration between Winetech, the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the UCT Graduate School of Business concluded that vine age does in fact have a significant influence on the price of wines in South Africa. They found that R2.96 was added for every year a vineyard had been in the ground, translating to a R103,60 premium for a 35-year-old vine entering old vine status.