



Leeu Passant

A strikingly elegant Chardonnay from Stellenbosch, exuding mineral freshness and coastal refinement from the Helderberg's elevated gravel slopes.

Leeu
PASSANT



Stellenbosch Chardonnay 2022

Swartland, South Africa

Region and Vineyards

Stellenbosch, a historic cornerstone of South African viticulture, provides a unique matrix of terroirs, among which the Helderberg stands out. Located near False Bay, the Helderberg slopes are famed for their maritime influence and diverse soils. The vineyard for the 2022 Leeu Passant Chardonnay is planted at 400 metres above sea level, benefiting from consistent ocean breezes that moderate temperatures throughout the growing season. These cool conditions ensure a long ripening period, which promotes vibrant acidity and complex flavour development.

The soils here are gravelly and well-draining, forcing the roots to dig deep, which contributes to the wine's structure and mineral backbone. This combination of high altitude and coastal proximity yields Chardonnay fruit with remarkable aromatic lift and tension. The site's exposure and altitude are pivotal in crafting a wine that speaks clearly of place, with precision and finesse as hallmarks of its character.

Winemaking

The 2022 vintage is composed of **100% Chardonnay**, hand-harvested in mid-March during cool morning hours to preserve natural acidity. Yields were deliberately kept low—about 5 tons per hectare—resulting in a concentrated base must of approximately 34 hectolitres per hectare.

Upon arrival at the cellar, grapes were gently whole-bunch pressed to extract only the finest juice. The must was allowed to settle overnight before being racked to barrel, where it underwent **spontaneous fermentation**, followed by **natural malolactic fermentation**. This unhurried, wild-yeast process lasted just over 60 days, ensuring complexity and balance.

Aged for a total of 23 months, the wine spent its first year in **tight grain 225L French oak barrels**, one-third of which were new. After racking and blending, it matured for an additional 11 months in the same barrels, enhancing its texture and integrating the oak seamlessly without overshadowing the fruit.

Alcohol :13,50 %

Composition: 100% Chardonnay



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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Pale gold with green hues, reflecting its cool-climate origin.
- **Aroma:** Crushed lime, yellow grapefruit, and hints of tangerine peel, intertwined with delicate notes of struck flint and a touch of sea spray.
- **Palate:** A vibrant entry of citrus and white pear evolves into a rounded mid-palate with subtle salinity, crystalline acidity, and a long, textured finish featuring a chalky grip and gentle creaminess.

Did you know?

Leeu Passant is the Franschhoek-based project of Andrea and Chris Mullineux, among South Africa's most celebrated winemakers. Their Leeu Passant range is crafted to showcase exceptional Cape heritage vineyard sites with Burgundian precision and reverence for place. The Stellenbosch Chardonnay is a contemporary South African interpretation of great white Burgundy, yet distinctly expressive of its Helderberg origins.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Grilled lobster with lemon butter** – complements the wine's saline minerality and citrus core.
- **Roast chicken with tarragon and cream sauce** – matches the richness and layered texture.
- **Pan-seared scallops with cauliflower purée** – echoes the wine's elegance and enhances its subtle nuttiness.
- **Butternut squash risotto with sage** – a vegetarian pairing that resonates with the wine's roundness and spice.



Robert Parker (RP) : 97 Points (2021)

Instantly impressive with oaky essences that sway with seductive cardamom and lemon pastry cream, the 2021 Leeu Passant Stellenbosch Chardonnay is expressive with yellow apples, toasted almonds and spiced white tea. Medium-bodied, the palate possesses fantastic texture, revealing seductive weight and flavors of lemon yogurt that burst with popcorn kernel essences and layers of citrus. The wine sways with refined oak flavors before concluding with a delightfully mineral-laced finish. Wow, this is spectacular Chardonnay!



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