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SOUTH AFRICAN WINE

Last update: Oct 9th, 2007 - 09:20:36

NAMIBIAN VINEYARD DEFIES ODDS TO PRODUCE WINE

By Sebastien Berger for the Telegraph UK
Oct 9, 2007, 09:14

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The production of top quality wine by a British-born businessman in one of the driest spots on the planet has been hailed as an "absolute miracle" by experts.

Defying all the odds, Allan Walkden-Davis planted a vineyard on the edge of the Namibian desert.

Now, a few miles from where the wind-whipped sands of the Namib stretch out to the Tsaris mountains, lies probably the world's most parched winery at Neuras.

As well as sunshine — available beyond abundance — grapes need water, but Neuras averages around 3in of rain a year, sometimes less than an inch.



Warwick Trilogy 2005

Ripe fruit flavours with hints of chocolate and mocha on the nose. Ripe prunes, raspberry and blackberry flavours abound with a silky soft mouth feel.

R152.94 p/ b
R917.65 per 6 bottles
VAT I incl.

6



Ernst and Co Pinot Noir 2006

Typically delicate floral aromatics with a slight earthy, forest floor note.

R139.71 p/ b
R838.24 per 6 bottles
VAT I incl.

6

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Even so Allan Walkden-Davis, now a proud naturalised citizen of Namibia, produces 3,000 to 3,500 bottles of acclaimed Shiraz and a Shiraz-Merlot blend annually.

Add in the presence of a tame one-eyed ostrich called Dolly and the concept begins to look more than eccentric.

"Afrikaans-speaking people think I'm on cloud whatever number," he said. "We had a number of wise old men who explained to us why it was not going to happen.

"One fellow couldn't understand why I would want to do something so outlandish.

He said: 'Can he not go bankrupt farming sheep or cattle the same as everyone else?'

But Mr Walkden-Davis, 63, is a former managing director of Shell Namibia, and with the help of a South African oenologist, Abrie Bruwer, the winery has been carefully planned.

By a series of geographical accidents the 35,000-acre farm, the majority of which is stony desert or savannah grassland, includes a geological fault and the green splash of a natural oasis that is near-perfect terroir.

Five springs provide copious quantities of pure water, the mountains shield the earth from the harsh desert wind and the alkaline soil is perfect for vines.

Nevertheless, the grapes have to be harvested in the early hours, before they become too warm.

Michael Olivier, a Cape Town-based wine writer and consultant, described the 2004 Namib Red as "absolutely stunning, amazing wine", with "nice dark berries," slight acidity, plums, and just a little bit of that peppery Italian leather".

"Knowing where it came from it was superb, he said. "The fact that grapes can be grown there to me is an absolute miracle."

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Post House Merlot 2004

A strong nose of raspberry, fynbos with a hint of mint and violets. Elegant wine with supple firm tannins.

R80.62 p/ b
R483.71 per 6 bottles
VAT Incl.

6



Quando Sauvignon Blanc 2007


Exotic forthcoming frangipani flower, gooseberry and fennel on the nose, following through with crisp acidity and classic flintiness.

R52.82 p/ b
R316.94 per 6 bottles
VAT Incl.

6

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EVENTS IN THE WINELANDS

JULI ET CULLI NAN WINES RED I CON WINE TASTING DINNER

2007-11-14 | Hollard Insurance, Villa Arcadia, 22 Oxford Road, Parktown

A selection of the finest wines in the Cape have been selected for tasting. The wines will be de...

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JORDAN ANNUAL OPEN DAY

2007-11-17 | Jordan Winery
 Jordan Winery will host their fourth annual Open Day on Saturday 17 November 2007. The proceeds ...

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FIRST WORLD SAUVIGNON BLANC CONGRESS TO BE HELD IN AUGUST 2008

Nov 2, 2007

BURLY SOUTH AFRICANS

Nov 2, 2007

QUALITY WINES IN NEW ULTRA-CONVENIENT, ECO-FRIENDLY PRISMA PACKS

Nov 1, 2007

ZONNEBLOEM LAUNCHES TRIO OF PRIZED LIMITED EDITION WINES

Nov 1, 2007

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**PAUL CLUVER FOREST AMPHI THEATRE
SUMMER CONCERT**

2007-11-17 | Paul Cluver Forest Amphitheatre,
Elgin/Grabouw, N2 Kromco turn-off
Bring family and friends and enjoy a wonderful
evening in the Paul Cluver Forest Amphitheatre
while ...

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MUSIC UNCORKED

2007-11-18 | Plaisir De Merle, Simondium Road,
Franchhoek
Music Uncorked in association with Le Bonheur,
Stellenzicht, Neethlingshof, Plaisir De Merle and Uit...

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**2ND ANNUAL PEARL'S GATE BARREL TASTING
FESTIVAL**

2007-11-18 | Nelson Wine Estate, conveniently
situated only 15 minutes off the N1 on the R44
towards Wellington.
Following the resounding success of last year's event,
Pearl's Gate, the Paarl winelands' "route wit...

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**CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST AT VOOR
PAARDEBERG**

Oct 30, 2007

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Sarnia Villa, 19 Concordia Street, Paarl 7646

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