

Solms-Delta Wine Estate

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Solms-Delta is a wine estate steeped in history. The South African roots of world-renowned neuroscientist Professor Mark Solms brought him back home in 2002 to revitalise the historic Delta wine estate and to fundamentally rethink Cape wine-making traditions in the process. Solms assumed custodianship of the 320-year-old estate with a vision that went much deeper than re-establishing its vineyards and cellars. He also wanted to do something about the legacy of his European forebears (who had settled in the Cape six generations before) and thereby address the pressing social and economic problems facing South Africa today. First he planted Rhône varietals, ideally suited to the dry, hot and windy Mediterranean climate of the Franschhoek Valley. Then he and the winemaker Hilko Hegewisch introduced desiccation – a largely forgotten, ancient Mediterranean vineyard practice. The result is a stable of wines that delivers a new, uniquely South African style. These are classical wines with a difference: made from grapes desiccated on the vine in the manner of the ancient Greeks, using selected French varietals that are known to thrive in Mediterranean climates, intelligently blended with the tried-and-tested favourite grape varietals of the old Cape. The wines offer a cascade of tastes and styles, all with a distinctive sense of place.

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