







Constantia Ward

- One of the four wards of the Cape Town District
- Vineyards planted on southeast-facing slopes behind Table Mountain, facing False Bay
- Soils: loamy Table Mountain sandstone and decomposed granite
- As soil tends to be fertile, rigorous canopy management is required



History

- Simon van der Stel (1639-1712) becomes Commander (1679), and later Governor (1691), of the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope
- In 1685, he is given 762-hectare Constantia property, which he turns into a fruit, vegetable and cattle farm and *an experimental wine estate*
- After his death, the property is split up and auctioned off.



Rise to Fame

- 1778: Hendrick Cloete (1639-1712) purchases and rehabilitates Groot Constantia
- By 1780, he had planted 10,000 new vines, and he started producing Vin de Constance/Constancia Wyn.
- Most wine was sold to colonial administrators, first the Dutch, and after 1795, the British, who started to import lots of Cape Colony wine [during their war with France]



**GROOT
CONSTANTIA**
A PLACE IN HISTORY

CONSTANTIA WINE FIT FOR A KING

In 1833 Captain Turpin, a commander aboard the French ship *La Souverain*, visited Groot Constantia bearing a letter from King Louis Philippe of France which authorized him to buy a considerable quantity of wine. Further orders from the King followed in 1834 & 1836.



King Louis Philippe 1830 - 1836

1778
Jan Barentse buys Groot Constantia and in 1780 sets up the first wine distillery in the Cape Colony. This is the start of our Constantia wine production.

1795
The first British discovery of the grape in the Cape Colony by Captain Cook and his crew. The discovery was made in the Cape Colony. This is the start of our Constantia wine production.

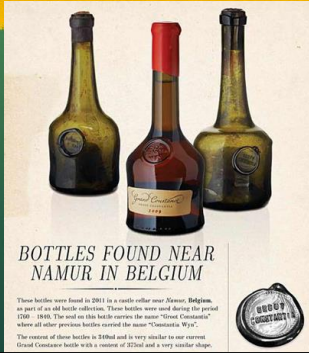
NOTABLE VINEYER
Francis & Yvonne 1950 - 1980
Francis & Yvonne were a French couple who came to the Cape in 1950 and set up the first vineyard in the Cape Colony. This is the start of our Constantia wine production.

Fall from Fame

- 1859 Powdery Mildew arrives at the Cape
- 1860 Great Britain and France conclude free trade agreement
- 1869 Suez Canal opens
- 1872 Jacob Cloete files for bankruptcy
- 1885 Groot Constantia becomes a Government Wine Farm
- 1889 Phylloxera arrives in Constantia [1886 in South Africa]
- 1925 Estate burns down; lands are leased out until 1957
- 1976 Control Board begins to run farm as wine business
- 1993 Groot Constantia Trust takes over -> tourism attraction




What was in those bottles?



What was in those bottles?

- "Analyses of recently opened bottles (still perfumed with a tang of citrus and smoky richness) show they were unfortified although high in alcohol." - *Oxford Companion to Wine, 4th ed.*
- It is believed some versions were fortified to help with the long ocean voyages
- Red or white Constantia without grape variety named on label
- Mainly Muscat Blanc a Petit Grains (*Mukadel*) with some (lesser quality) Muscat of Alexandria and Chenin Blanc
- Pontac (*teinturier*) grapes were added to red versions

Today...three producers



Klein Constantia



Groot Constantia



Buitenverwachting