

Background to the Sijnn Project

This is an exciting vineyard venture on a stony plateau between Malagas and Cape Infanta approximately 230km east of Cape Town. Together with a few strategic partners, a small run-down ostrich and grain farm was purchased in 2000 and on finding two partners to help finance the project bush vines were planted in 2004. The vineyards are located 70m above the Breede River, 25 km from the sea by boat and 15 km as the crow flies.



At this stage there are no other vineyards within a 40 km radius, the closest being those inland around Swellendam and along the coast at Elim. The complex stony soils, together with a warm dry climate (350mm rain) moderated by the constant sea breezes offers excellent vineyard potential and the possibility of producing something unique. As this is quite a pioneering venture, extensive soil studies (including 200 profile holes) were undertaken and together with climatic data a variety of proven Mediterranean or southern European varieties have been planted, including Syrah, Mourvedre, Touriga Nacional, Cabernet Sauvignon and Trincadeira. Chenin Blanc, Viognier and Roussanne have been planted for the white wine blend.



On 9 February 2007 the first grapes were carefully picked and transported back to Stellenbosch for vinification by the De Trafford team. Production has grown from 10 tons in 2007 to 54 tons in 2012. All the vines are grown as bush vines with a maximum yield seldom more than 3 to 4 tons / ha.

In November 2013 it was decided to start building a small, low key cellar and tasting room in keeping with the environment. As David was an architect by trade prior to making wine, he designed the building and visited Malgas weekly to make sure the building was finished in time for the opening of our winery on April 23, 2014. Guests are welcome to visit the cellar for wine tastings and sales every Saturday 10am – 3pm.



David and Rita Trafford

David Trafford started De Trafford Winery in 1992 after many years of hobby winemaking and working in St.Emilion, Bordeaux for the 1989 harvest season. His winemaking philosophy was initially informed by this. Attention to detail in the vineyard and minimal interference in the winemaking process – minimal sulphur additions, no yeast or added acid, no filtration etc.



Married to **Rita** in 1994, together with a small team of workers, they grew the winery from 300 cases to current production of 4000 cases with an enviable reputation as one of the top boutique wineries in South Africa. For more information on de Trafford visit their website www.detrafford.co.za.



David was honoured and privileged to be invited in 2000 to become a member of the **Cape Winemakers Guild**. He has managed to have a wine on each Auction every year except 2003. The knowledge and assistance gained from fellow winemakers within the Guild has been significant to his ongoing quest to produce better wines.

Simon Farr – Shareholder

Simon and Peri Farr have been shareholders since day one. Simon started his involvement in wine in the vineyards of Bordeaux in 1973, followed by working in the London wine trade and in a winery in California. In 1982 Simon founded Bibendum Wine Limited which has grown over the years into the largest independent wine merchant in the UK. Simon met David & Rita the day before their wedding and Bibendum became their importer for de Trafford in the UK and they are now importing our Sijnn wines as well.



Quentin Hurt – Shareholder

Quentin and Alison Hurt are the newest (and youngest) shareholders in the Malagas Wine Company venture. Like David, Quentin was born in Durban. He trained as a chemical engineer at the University of KZN and spent his student vacations working for his bursar, National Chemical Products, in their fermentation division. At this point, his budding career in brewing deviated because most of the assignments involved looking at ways to reduce the effluent loading from the plant, projects which ultimately developed into further study and a career as an environmental engineer. In 1994, he formed Ecoserv, an environmental consultancy, which was acquired by SGS in 2007. In 2013, he decided to leave SGS and pursue his personal projects.



Quentin's interest in wine brought him into contact with David in the mid-nineties. When a share became available in the Malagas venture in 2009, he seized the opportunity. The quality of the wines, the challenge of the new venture and David's and Simon's track record attracted him and Alison to the project.



In the last year, he has enjoyed getting more involved in aspects of the Sijnn project, including the impact assessment for the winery, the biodiversity and IPC accreditation and researching the solar energy aspects for the farm and cellar. He hopes to continue to contribute to improving the environmental performance of the farm and winery operations while enjoying its produce, too.

Julie Loff and Team

Julie and his wife Magrieta and family moved from Graham Beck, Robertson at the outset of the project, managing and attending to all the work on the farm together with vineyard workers, Harry and Elizabeth. They ably manage all aspects of the vineyard work and development with the direction of David Trafford.



Christine Andrews

Christine was employed to do the sales and marketing for Sijnn Wines in September 2013. She is from New Zealand, lived abroad in Japan, China, and Australia for nine years before moving to SA in 2010. While working abroad Christine completed her double degree in Chinese (Mandarin) and accounting through Massey University. On moving to SA Christine was intrigued by the wine tasting experiences offered by our 600+ wine estates in the Western Cape. After visiting 23 within three months she started a blog (<http://westerncapewineries.blogspot.com>) and a monthly wine club. She is very passionate about wine and about sharing the Sijnn experience. Be sure to follow Sijnn on Facebook to see where she is pouring our wines next!!

