

# GOOD WINE

by: Neil Strydom

## Peter Falke

### Wine Estate

**I**n the magnificent Helderberg valley where the scenery can take one's breath away, is a small boutique wine estate that does exactly that. Peter Falke wine estate is a gem in the heart of the Helderberg wine valley that screams of art, beauty and quality. With the majestic Helderberg behind and a bird's eye view of False Bay in front, one cannot help to take a second deep breath. This valley has impressed me for a long time, not only due to the dramatic views, but also the quality of the wines.

Generally the soils of Helderberg are rich in nutrients. They comprise of shale soils with broken granite up on the hills. Peter Falke is in the prime region within the valley, in my opinion. This is due to the area where underground water funnels down the slope and brings rich nutrients along, creating lush growth. In summer the renowned south-easter wind keeps the leaf canopy open and clean from pests that normally thrive in humid conditions. These strong winds also bring in cool air from the ocean, cooling down the grapes that hang proudly on these picturesque slopes. In the winter the bountiful rain accumulates against the mountain and helps the vineyard replenish the reserves for the long African summer ahead. Peter Falke is situated in one of the many meso-climates that do really well with Red grapes, in particular the so-called Bordeaux cultivars.

The first impression of Peter Falke wine estate is the incredible attention to the finest little detail. From the entrance

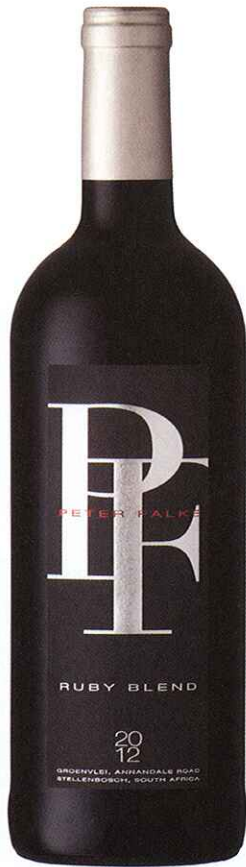
to the cellar there is several "awe" moments. The tranquil environment has similar effects as a day at the spa. The gardens remind me of European grandeur with every flower in exactly the right place. The combination of the different aromas is very refreshing and contributes to the whole experience. The old Cape Dutch manor house stands out like an old Elephant bull on

the Savannah. The garden is truly inviting and I can sit there for hours on end, merely enjoying the African sun. As sublime as the gardens might be, nothing prepared me for the artistic splendour of the building inside. The contrast in colour, design and originality is mind blowing. From the entrance to the tasting premises to the chandelier in the barrel cellar, the word "wow" comes to mind. The layout has its own charm with a laidback country life atmosphere. Yet there is an astonishing amount of detail put into the interior design of the estate. You feel almost guilty of leaving and possibly offending the host. The deep red against the raw oak is very dramatic and you have to take a moment to take it all in. The interior is a rich experience of colour contrast and creativity.

The wines reflect this terroir to great extent. Tasting through the wines, the terroir is very expressive with lots of Red berries that are known

for this particular region. Furthermore the wines have good solid structure that will age well into the future. I am impressed with the elegance and feel of the wines. The wines are a true expression of the soils and a great find.





**Ruby Blend 2012**  
Cabernet Sauvignon / Shiraz

### General

The intensity of this wine can be almost surprising, as there is an explosion of flavours that overwhelm the taste buds. With two strong cultivars it is often difficult to blend without one overpowering the other, but this is not the case. The wine reflects both cultivars with good result. The ruby of the name is a great description of the colour. This is a really good food wine that is worth aging for up to eight years or more.

### Nose of the wine

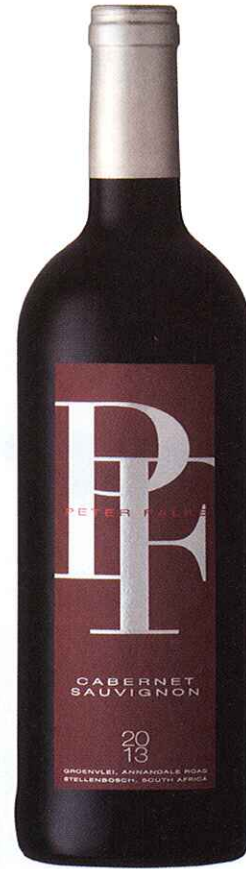
The aroma of Cinnamon and fruitcake is quite apparent with Cherry and Mulberry completing the fusion. Once decanted there is some truffle aromas that show the complexity of the wine. This combination makes for an inviting prospect.

### The sipping test

As would be expected from the cultivars in the blend, there are loads of aromatic flavours filling the pallet. At first there is a beefy, oxtail and leathery taste to the wine. As the wine opens up the Licorice and black currant dominates the pallet. This is so important for the blend to evolve. The wine has a decent acidity that gives nice structure it.

### What to eat .....

With the aromatic nature of the wine, it could be a good pairing for a large variety of dishes. My personal choice would be Lamb shank as the Licorice will bring an amazing flavour to the dish. One can be bold when pairing this wine as it will go down well with steak, curry or even Eisbein.



**2013 Cabernet Sauvignon**

### General

This is one of my favourite cultivars and therefore I am normally very critical of the style. However, this wine has simply impressed my socks off. The wine kept evolving in the glass and that is a great indicator of its potential to age well. As a winemaker I am aware of just how difficult it is to make Cabernet Sauvignon as it is normally the last grapes to come in to the cellar. Often the fermentation can be tricky. The colour is sublime and the really dark hue of the wine is telling me about the nice small berries that were picked.

### Nose of the wine

This wine shouts Carpaccio and wet Biltong up front. As it evolves there is truffle and autumn leave aromas filling the glass. The wine shows lots of veggie characters like green beans and spinach.

### The sipping test

Blackcurrant attacks the tongue at first, which is very refreshing. Herbal aromas fill the mid pallet and over time curry components become noticeable. As the wine oxidises in the glass, sweet berry flavours become overwhelming. The wine has a well rounded pallet with the Tannins well balanced.

### What to eat .....

The structure of the wine makes it a great pairing with a healthy portion of beef. What happens is that the beef juices and the herbal character of the wine will create a slightly spicy aroma. This wine with curry could be very exciting. For the sweet tooth, it could be a great partner to a bitter Chocolate or mouse.