

Bonnievale Wines' The River Collection: fresh, fun and fabulous

By Ilse van den Berg

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Bonnievale is one of those gorgeous small farming towns that are in abundance in our country. It is largely undisturbed - apart from the current roadworks, the Wacky Wine festival in Robertson, and Parmalat employees booking out B&B rooms for plant visits and meetings throughout the year.



One of the things that makes Bonnievale such a gem is the fact that it's located slap-bang in the middle of two mountain ranges, the Riviersonderend and the Langeberg mountains.

The lush, greenery - fed by the Breede River and a series of canals - is eye-catching, to say the least, and it instantly evokes a sense of peace and tranquillity as you allow your eyes to wander over the landscape.

Now, about the wine...

The other thing that makes it a must-visit destination is, of course, its top-quality wines.

We recently headed out of town to attend Bonnievale Wines' new premium wine range launch, dubbed The River Collection. A fitting name, seeing that the Breede River is the main, life-giving artery of this region.



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Shaping this valley over millennia, the river not only nourishes the vines but contributes to the unique character of the wines.

Says Bonnievale CEO, John Barnardt: "The river is the reason for our existence. It's the core and heartbeat of our wines. As such, The River Collection is the heart of our offering – a premium selection that is our primary focus."

Once we arrived, our fun-filled day kicked off at [Weltevrede winefarm](#) with a meet and greet and tasty cheese platters paired with some of Weltevrede's fresh white wines.

After an MCC bottle labelling session (my personally labelled bottle of bubbly to be popped on my birthday!) and an underground cellar tour and tasting, we headed to our accommodation to get ready for the exciting evening function at Bonnievale Wines.



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And what a turnout! The courtyard was alive with guests clinking champagne glasses, laughing and chatting exuberantly - there was a clear excitement in the air.

Set in the wine cellar, we were treated to a feast of food and drink while we were informed about the new wine collection as well as other happenings at Bonnievale Wines.



The inception of The River Collection represents first light in an exciting transformation underway at Bonnievale Wines.

Says Carina Gous, strategic brand advisor for Bonnievale Wines: “The River Collection represents an important step in communicating the high quality and authenticity inherent in Bonnievale Wines. In addition to having a long and excellent history of co-operation and collaboration, its winemakers have access to a vast diversity of cultivars and terroirs in unique locations.”

The winery’s new crest reflects the blend of its heritage with the unique location of its wines. The cellar gable speaks of history; the three-arched bridge, of collaboration and teamwork, and the original wineries; the blue diamonds bordered by triangles, the river and vineyards; and, the ribbon, of unity.

The River Collection tasting

The River Collection currently includes a Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and dry Cinsault Rosé. From the tasting notes below, you’ll quickly realise this wine range will be the perfect summer companion.

Our tasting started with the Cinsault Rosé 2018 which is made in the crisp, dry style of Southern France. The result is a light, aromatic and refreshing wine that will pair well with seafood and fresh salads.



Bonnievale The River Collection Cinsault Rosé

The Sauvignon Blanc 2018 was up next. This medium-bodied wine is fresh and crisp with a slight flinty undertone. Tropical notes with a hint of herbs show on the nose and reflect on the palate, too.

The Chenin Blanc 2018 is crisp and bright with floral and fruity aromas that are pleasantly amplified on the palate. It is satisfying when savoured by itself or served with full-flavoured white meat dishes.

The Chardonnay 2018 is a rounded, delicate wine with subtle aromas of oak, citrus and peach. On the palate are tones of dried fruit. It can be enjoyed on its own or with hearty curries, creamy pastas and salads.

But wait, there’s more! The wine farm will be adding reds to the range when the 2017 vintage is released later this year.

The River Collection wines available are currently being sold from the cellar door for R57 each - an exceptional price for exceptional wines. Hence me rocking up back in Cape Town with a box of wine under one arm, pulling my suitcase with the other.

For more, visit www.bonnievalewines.co.za.

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work [here](#) and [here](#). Contact Ilse through her website [here](#).

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