

Estate's dual crop wins accolades

Wine and olive oil go together – at least they do on Kloovenburg, where husband Pieter du Toit looks after the former, while wife Annalene has put the estate into the top 15 in the world for extra virgin olive oil production.

For the past 300 years, Kloovenburg has harnessed the rich agricultural potential of the Swartland's soil, yet it wasn't until its purchase some 50 years ago by the Du Toit family that the name Kloovenburg became synonymous with quality. Today, under the leadership of husband-and-wife team Pieter and Annalene du Toit, the estate is a top-end wine producer and olive grower of international acclaim. Its wines are exported to the USA, UK, a number of European countries, plus Canada, Mauritius and the Seychelles. The olive oil is exported to a number of European countries, Sweden, the Seychelles and Mauritius.

The estate's wines have also won a range of awards.

The estate's success began in 1958 when Piet du Toit (snr) purchased it and set about expanding and improving vineyards. A need to diversify saw him introduce olive orchards into the region some 19 years ago. Under his wing, son Pieter du Toit dreamt of one day taking over operations and expanding the farm. At the age of eight he secretly decided to eventually buy the neighbouring farm and develop a range of wines. It took him 10 years, but he accomplished both objectives.

The estate now boasts a newly renovated 200-ton cellar and spans 300 hectares along the lower contours of the Kasteel Mountain. Some 130 hectares are devoted to wine grape production. Annalene's quality olive oil has recently seen Kloovenburg recognised as one of the world's top 15 producers of extra virgin olive oil, and the ever-growing demand for Pieter's award-winning wines both locally and abroad is shaping a prosperous future for the third generation of du Toits – Pieter and Annalene's four young sons.

Annalene and their four young sons produce their own wine, aptly named Eight Feet – a 60/40 Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot blend – ensuring wine making remains a family affair.

A need to increase and diversify wine production saw Kloovenburg restore their 1860 cellar. Today, Kloovenburg offers their flagship Shiraz as well as Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc and their most recent addition the Kloovenburg 'White from Red Shiraz' – most of which have won top awards.

Du Toit's philosophy on winemaking is that 'Success depends equally on the suitability of terroir and the skill of the winemaker.' At Kloovenburg, skill and terroir are well matched to produce wines of excellence.

He values quality over quantity, hence, irrigation at Kloovenburg is kept to a minimum to produce low-yield vineyards, promote slow-ripening, flavour-rich grapes and ensure wines of body, complexity and excellence.

The estate's entry into the olive industry is marked by passion and chance. Says olive specialist Annalene du Toit, 'I simply used to enjoy experimenting with creating olives products. Our decision to sell my popular bottled olives from the farmhouse kitchen started a new industry for Kloovenburg.'

The estate produces five cultivars, including Mission, Manzanilla, Frantoio, Coratina and SF-17, and today Kloovenburg Wine and Olive Estate produces over 30 olive products, including a new addition to the range, Olive Chutney. There's also a range of olive-based body products as well.

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