

MONT ROCHELLE

HOTEL & MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS

Media Release
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MONT ROCHELLE LAUNCHES ITS PREMIER RED: MIKO CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2006

Mont Rochelle Mountain Vineyards in Franschhoek has launched its much anticipated premier red wine: the MIKO Cabernet Sauvignon 2006.

Blended by young wine maker Dustin Osborne (27) to fulfil Mont Rochelle's MIKO premium range, the red blend comprises of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7.5% Petit Verdot, and 7.5% Syrah. All grapes used were grown on the Mont Rochelle farm, showcasing the top quality fruit produced here on the slopes of the Franschhoek Mountains.

An intense inky red colour is understated by classic cassis with hints of blackberry and a perfumed finish. The palate is highly concentrated with nice fleshy fruit and elegant, yet structured tannins that contribute to the length and balance of the wine. Only 3600 Bottles of MIKO Cabernet Sauvignon 2006 have been produced, and the wine is available from leading wine shops and restaurants, at the Cellar Door (R300 per bottle) or may be enjoyed at the two restaurants on the Mont Rochelle farm.

Mont Rochelle owner Erwin Schnitzler says that the MIKO Red was produced following the success of the MIKO Chardonnay, which was launched in 2007 and went on to win Silver in the Chardonnay du Monde (France) 2008. 'We set out to create a special red wine, which would match the quality range of the MIKO brand, and we are very proud to have produced this Cabernet blend, which we believe completely fulfils the quality standard envisioned for the MIKO range.'

He continued to say that Mont Rochelle wines are known as excellent food wines, which are always crafted stylistically and structurally to match the world-class cuisine produced at the Mont Rochelle Hotel and its two restaurants: Mange Tout for fine dining and the more informal Country Kitchen.

According to wine maker Dustin Osborne, who joined Mont Rochelle two years ago (July 2007), the Mont Rochelle motto is to 'keep it traditional'. Born in the Free State, Osborne is a graduate of the prestigious Lincoln University, Christchurch. Before joining Mont Rochelle he spent four years following wine harvests around the world and worked in Canada, America, New Zealand and South Africa experiencing many different wine techniques.

'My vision for our vineyard is to produce award-winning grown and made wines, that are terroir driven, always keeping nature in mind. I am passionate about having a hand in the whole process from growing through to bottling. My personal belief is that '*great wines*' begin in the vineyard and are only nurtured in the winery, and minimal intervention is key. I believe this minimalist attitude ensures wines of character and distinction, a strategy which I believe is also evident in the MIKO Cabernet Sauvignon', he concluded.

MORE ABOUT MONT ROCHELLE MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS

Mont Rochelle Mountain Vineyards is situated on the slopes of the beautiful Franschoek Mountains, 2km from the village centre. The estate is part of a farm first owned by Jacques de Villiers, one of the original Huguenots that came to the valley in 1688 after fleeing religious persecution from France.

Mont Rochelle Mountain Vineyards has been producing wine since 1995 when Graham de Villiers (an 8th generation descendant of Jacques de Villiers) bought the property, which at that stage was purely a fruit farm, producing plums and pears. Over the next 8 years, all the fruit trees were removed and the vineyard planting process began.

The winery, on the 33 hectare farm is an old fruit pack store dating back to the 1850's, which with the onset of the grape production, was turned into a 200 ton capacity wine producing cellar.

In 2001, the farm was sold to Miko Rwayitare, a Congolese telecommunications entrepreneur, who ran the farm until 2006. Then known as the La Couronne Hotel and Restaurant, it was severely damaged by a fire in February 2006. The hotel's main wing including the restaurant, kitchen, spa and gymnasium as well as seven rooms were completely gutted. With the temporary closure of the well-known hotel renowned as a gourmet destination, owners Miko Rwayitare and Erwin Schnitzler used the opportunity to merge the hotel and their neighbouring Mont Rochelle Mountain Vineyards, to create the new Mont Rochelle Hotel and Mountain Vineyards brand. Today, Mont Rochelle is run by Schnitzler, an experienced German Hotelier who previously owned Michelin-graded restaurants in Germany, as well as a Relais & Chateaux property in Tegernsee.

Plantings on the farm consist of Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Viognier, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Shiraz, Mouvedre and Petit Verdot, as well as a small amount of Semillon which has been grafted onto existing vines.

Currently around 60 000 – 70 000 bottles are produced annually from 100 tons of grapes, which include Sauvignon Blanc, Unwooded Chardonnay, Barrel Fermented Chardonnay, MIKO Chardonnay Sur Lie, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, Artemis (Red blend) as well as MIKO Cabernet Sauvignon.

Of prime importance to Mont Rochelle is not only its relationship with agents, distributors and retailers, but also with the end consumer, and therefore the Cellar Door experience encompasses wine tastings and cellar tours as an integral part of Mont Rochelle wines, in addition to the wines being served in the two restaurants on the farm.

Mont Rochelle wines are currently available in the UK, Holland, USA, Ireland, Belgium, Russia, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and Germany, as well as from specialist wine shops and restaurants in South Africa.

Recent accolades include: **Monde Selection Bruxelles 2009** Mont Rochelle Cabernet Sauvignon 2004 GOLD and Mont Rochelle Syrah 2004 GOLD, and **Chardonnay du Monde (France) 2008** MIKO Chardonnay Sur Lie 2006 SILVER.

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