

24^{of} 100**Danna
de Jongh**

Here to be Steadfast

**Breaking new ground in a
centuries old tradition.**

Danna de Jongh grew up far away from the Stellenbosch winelands, on a small farm set in the dry, arid landscape of Namibia.

However, the resilience, curiosity and deep respect for the environment and the people who shape it that was cultivated in her childhood are defining qualities in her journey to become one of South Africa's leading Cap Classique winemakers.

She occupies a rare space in local winemaking. Part of a new generation of female winemakers, she has chosen to master one of the industry's most technically demanding disciplines: Cap Classique, where precision, patience and a little dose of intuition converge, particularly during the crucial second fermentation which takes place inside the bottle itself.

De Jongh's route into viticulture was unconventional. She had originally embarked on studying law, but it was during a visit to Germany

that her interest was piqued. After a short internship at a local winery, she enrolled at Geisenheim University, a globally renowned centre of excellence for viticulture, oenology and beverage technology.

The opportunity to become a winemaker and viticulturist at Constantia Uitsig proved pivotal. Entrusted with the management of the vineyards and the cellar at the historic estate, gave her the confidence to pursue what might seem ambitious.

Today, as Cap Classique and white winemaker at Simonsig Wine Estate, De Jongh is responsible for one of South Africa's most celebrated sparkling wine legacies: ensuring that every bottle of Kaapse Vonkel delivers the quality, consistency and character consumers have come to know and trust.

South African cellars have traditionally been heavily male-dominated and, although the landscape has evolved, it remains rare for a woman to lead highly specialised Cap Classique production, particularly when the wine is arguably the most historically significant sparkling wine in the Southern Hemisphere.

Reserved and steely focused, De Jongh has tackled the task with meticulous attention to detail and a deep respect for the heritage of Kaapse Vonkel, which celebrated its 55th anniversary this year.

But, for De Jongh, producing Cap Classique on a significant scale is about far more than making wine; it is about protecting a legacy, understanding the diversity of their vineyards, leading a team, solving problems every day and continuously striving to make something better.

The balance between heritage and innovation is

Fusing European technical precision with South Africa's distinctive winemaking style, she has helped push the category forward, championing contemporary additions to the portfolio such as incorporating Pinotage, a defining part of South Africa's winemaking identity, into Kaapse Vonkel Brut Rosé and the pioneering Satin Nectar Rosé.

Her belief in possibility extends beyond the cellar. A passionate cheerleader of those around her, De Jongh has encouraged her husband to pursue his dream of designing and building his first sailboat. His high performance monohull, Avanti26, has since garnered plaudits for its innovative and efficient design.

Recognising and nurturing the potential in others - and offering support when the path ahead is uncertain - is central to De Jongh's leadership philosophy. She believes in people, in ideas, and in the possibility of building something bigger than oneself. And, for her, Cap Classique is about more than what is in the bottle. It is about celebrating our stories, connecting people and bringing communities together.

**Your
story
matters**

