

CHARLES BACK  
**FAIRVIEW**  
SINCE 1693

2006 THE BEACON SHIRAZ

At 33°44' latitude 18°48' longitude, the surveyor general's trigonometric beacon 194 rises above a mound of ancient metamorphic shale. Formerly the bed of a primordial ocean, these shales were blasted into a mound by the heating actions of magma penetrating close to the earth's surface. The Dreyer family has farmed in Paarl since 1705. Willie, the present generation Dreyer farmer, has an intimate knowledge of dry land farming. Unirrigated bush vines battle through large, flat, grey shale stone. The roots must claw their way deep beneath the rock in search of moisture and nutrients. Nature and the farmer work a double shift: the Glenrosa soils of Paarl encourage grape bunches with tiny berries; the vines are pruned to bear a small crop. The joint result is a wine of considerable concentration and distinction.

*Charles Back*

**IN THE VINEYARD:** This dry farmed vineyard was planted in 1995, using Shiraz clone SH9A, grafted onto rootstock R110. The deep Glenrosa soil type retains soil moisture well and ripens the crop early, without stressing, during our long hot summers. Planted on a North-westerly facing rocky outcrop, the vines are pruned to a "bosstok" or bush vine. Depending on the growth, the vine is pruned to between 3 and 5 bearers per vine. Summer canopy management includes a topping, which will reduce wind damage, as well as green cropping at 80% veraison to ensure even ripening. The vineyard is regularly visited during the ripening period and tested by tasting, visual and analytical examination to determine the ideal picking date.

**HARVEST DATE:** Morning of 10 February 2006

**WINEMAKING:** Grapes were harvested fully ripe at 25.9° balling. The fruit was brought to the cellar in small lug boxes, destalked and hand sorted over a sorting table. All raisins, under ripe berries and stalks were removed. The sorted berries were sent straight to 500 litre open French oak fermenters. Manual punch downs (*pigeage*) were performed three times daily. Post fermentation maceration lasted for six days. Wine was basket pressed, and malolactic fermentation was completed in barrel. The wine was then racked, lightly sulphured and returned to 40% new French oak, with the remainder in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> fill French oak barrels. This vintage spent a total of 16 months in oak.

**WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS:** Having worked with this block for a number of years (and seeing the wines develop in the bottle) we are improving our understanding of the terroir. With this has come an understanding of the grippy, bold tannins that characterise the wines. This creates wines that reward time in the bottle. *Anthony de Jager*

**TASTING NOTE:** Bold and austere, with firm tannins and good acid indicating maturation potential. Shows ripe dark fruit, with a savoury edge.

**RECOGNITION:**

4 ½ stars – Platter's Wine Guide

**PREVIOUS VINTAGES:**

2005: Gold – Concours Mondial de Bruxelles 2008

2005: 4 ½ stars – Platter's Wine Guide

2004: Gold – IWSC 2006

2004: 90 points – Wine Spectator

2003: 4 ½ stars – Platters' Wine Guide

2002: 93 points – Wine Spectator



<i>Wine of Origin</i>	Paarl
<i>Alcohol</i>	14.37%
<i>Residual sugar</i>	4.1 g/l
<i>Total acid</i>	5.9 g/l
<i>pH</i>	3.46

**VARIETIES**  
Shiraz 100%

