



Buitenverwachting

Est. 1796

BUITENVERWACHTING

A farm in the Constantia Valley

The first thing the Muellers did after buying the historic but run down farm Buitenverwachting in 1981 was to build 28 beautiful 'worker houses' which were built to look like a Swiss village, followed shortly thereafter by a soil and climate analysis. Location for plantings and suitable cultivars were next on the programme. Vines were planted over 100 hectares. A full history of the farm can be seen at www.buitenverwachting.com

The first harvest of 100 tons of grapes was in 1985 and exceeded all expectations.

Son Lars Maack took over the management of the farm in 1991. His focus was and is on transforming Buitenverwachting into a financially viable wine-producing farm with a happy, healthy and efficient staff. He is also enthusiastic about endorsing South African culture and heritage.

Staff at Buitenverwachting benefit from the following conditions

- Industry-standard wages with 50% overtime bonus for Saturdays and 100% overtime bonus for Sundays.
- Rent-free accommodation. Every family has their own house and garden.
- Free water
- Free electricity (Eskom price increases have been 125% over the past three years).
- Kindergarten and Crèche facility with three qualified staff running these. The children are provided with three meals a day and have a well-fitted playground.
- Sporting facilities are available for older children. (Soccer, Cricket and Netball).
- There are over 50 children on the farm and transport is provided to and from schools.
- A contribution is made to school fees.
- Medical examinations are free.
- There is a clinic at Buitenverwachting and a Doctor is available every Wednesday at the farm for consultations. This has been a benefit for the past 25 years.
- 50% is paid towards required medication.

- Transport is provided free of charge to shopping centres and hospitals.
- Staff may make interest free loans from the farm.
- Specialised training courses for Diesel Mechanic; Hospitality and various other training required such as commercial truck, forklift etc are also paid for by the farm.
- The farm produces its own vegetables, eggs and meat which are available to staff.
- There is a Community Hall for church services, weddings and any other functions staff may wish to hold.

The Villagers elect a Committee of Representatives to look after their interests and deal with any day to day problems which may arise. The Committee meets on a regular basis with Lars, whose benevolent and firm code of ethics is appreciated by them.

One of the people who work on the farm in administration said; “My family moved to Buitenverwachting when I was 13 years old and my father got a position as Vineyard Supervisor. It was heaven! There was a social worker to look into our needs, my schooling was paid for, I took music lessons and we went on outings, one which I particularly enjoyed was a visit to the Opera!” Her enthusiasm was palpable...

Recent additions to facilities are:

- 200 Koekoek chickens have recently arrived from Bloemfontein. The Koekoek chicken is a popular indigenous breed: productive, laying dark brown eggs and good eating at the end of their productive life.
- 70 established Orange trees (2m) have been planted throughout the Village. (great Vitamin C)
- Vegetable garden has been re-planted ready for the Spring... loads of organically produced vegetables for the staff as well as the restaurant kitchen.
- Plans to auction the Herefords and replace them with a herd of South Africa’s beautiful indigenous Nguni Cattle are in place.

Buitenverwachting does not use labour brokers. Lars is very much opposed to this practice as it offers no security to workers, workers are usually only employed for 3 or 4 months per year and income is low.

A fine example of the success Lars is achieving with his goals is that an employee approached him recently to thank him for his job and told him that many of his friends and family members were being retrenched.

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