

Franschhoek Timeline

- 1650 The Valley was known as “Oliphantshoek”: elephant cows found the isolation ideal for raising their calves.
- 1685 Commander Simon van der Stel requests more colonists from Chamber of Seventeen in Holland.
- 1688 Arrival of the main party of Huguenots.
- 1692 The first farm in the area (*Keerweder*) was allotted to Heinrich Müller.
- 1694 The Huguenot settlers living in Drakenstein applied for better farms. Commander Simon van der Stel then allocated 9 farms in the Oliphantshoek area: *La Dauphiné, Bourgogne, La Bri, Champagne, La Motte, Cabrière, La Cotte, La Terra de Luc* and *La Provence*. They practised mixed farming (stock, grain and vineyards).
- 1700 The first wine in Franschhoek is produced.
- 1713 Smallpox epidemic killed many Huguenots, but the Khoikhoi were especially hard hit – whole tribes effaced.
- 1713 The Valley became known as De France Hoek (The French Corner) because mainly French-speakers inhabited it.
- 1845 The first town plots were surveyed on *La Cotte*.
- 1886 Fruit cultivation started in Franschhoek and the first guesthouse in South Africa opened on *Keerweder*. All because of a phylloxera infestation of the vineyards that nearly caused the farmers to go bankrupt. To save themselves they planted more orchards. The wine industry picked up only after the importation of disease-resistant rootstock from America.
- 1905 Mr Popart hid some tobacco seeds in his socks and smuggled it out of Turkey. He gave it to the farmer at *Champagne* who started a local tobacco-industry.
- 1934 Electricity came to Franschhoek.
- 1938 The Main Street is tarred and inaugurated with the breaking of a bottle of champagne and a vintage car parade.
- 1938 The public contributed money towards the 250th anniversary of the arrival of the Huguenots and the Huguenot Memorial Monument was erected in Franschhoek.
- 1958 Groendal became a coloured-only area.
- 1984 The Vignerons de Franschhoek was founded and the focus turned back to mainly wine farming.
- 1992 F Arendse became the first non-white Mayor (Franschhoek Municipality) in South Africa.