

## 2019 Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge Pinot Noir

RANGE: GPS Series

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Pinot Noir made from French clones PN777 & PN115.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge, Western Cape, South Africa.

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 3,588 tons selected from 2 small parcels of Pinot Noir.

HISTORY: During the year, I have the opportunity to visit a number of areas outside of Elgin. Occasionally, I come across something so fascinating it deserves a closer look. In 2018, I discovered two small parcels of Pinot Noir grapes grown on Bokkeveld Shale in a protected lee of the Hemel-en-Aarde valley – an area renowned for Pinot Noir. It made sense to grasp the opportunity with both hands and the GPS Series is testament to these special places and celebrates them.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 21st – 27th February 2019 Brix at Harvest: 23.00 – 23.10

SEASON: As a vintage 2019 started well with a return to average winter rainfall that continued well into spring. In tandem, cold units to allow much need respite for the vines to sleep were the best for five years. The cooler spring did result in a late bud break for Pinot, and although there were some unusually warm conditions at the end of October, spring was milder than average with quite a high amount of liberally sprinkled rainfall - 200mm - between October and December. The wind surged on several days damaging some of the young shoots and flowers but was sporadic, leaving us with lower yields on some parcels and average on others. The cooler November weather also meant some flowers failed to pollinate correctly resulting in millerandage in which fewer berries appear on the eventual bunches. As New Year came and went, summer was cooler than average and maximums during the hottest months never got more than 34°C. The cooler weather did help the vines accumulate flavour more gradually. We started picking Pinot Noir in the last week of February about a week after the warmer weather had subsided. The malic acids are higher, giving more bite and freshness to the wine. Equally, the colder conditions allowed synchronous ripening of sugar and secondary metabolites alongside fantastic colour, elegant structure and more finesse to the tannins.

WINEMAKING: The grapes were handpicked into small lug baskets and manually sorted on a conveyor before the stems were removed. The destemmed berries fell onto a vibrating table in order to remove jacks and substandard berries before dropping uncrushed into small 500kg open-topped fermenters. The grapes underwent a 3-day maceration before spontaneous fermentation began. A gentle delestage program was charted, whereby all the juice ran from the tank daily, to allow any unwanted lees to settle out and for the cap to completely collapse before running the juice back over the crumbled pomace. The grapes remained on skins for 14-15 days before being run off their skins to tank with the remaining marc gently basket pressed. The wine settled overnight before being racked by gravity to barrel. Malolactic proceeded in barrel followed by a light sulphuring after which the finished wine spent around 10-11 months undergoing maturation. During this period each and every barrel was tasted every 6 weeks and notes and scores logged to better understand our knowledge of clonal, soil and barrel selection. No finings were used, and the wine was simply racked and lightly filtered prior to bottling.

BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected, all from Burgundy and only French oak was chosen. Importantly, each clone and soil type was micro vinified as two separate batches. Each batch used an algorithm that we developed to ascertain which coopers work best and how many new and used barrels were utilised. Overall, the average in 2019 was 21.8% new oak; 76.1% 228 l and 23.9% 500 l.

ALCOHOL: 13.84%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 2730 bottles were produced.

TASTING PROFILE: Pretty rose petal, red cherry and orange blossom are emphasised by the brightness of aroma. The ripe, fleshy fruit rounds out the mid-palate and the plush texture gives density to the overall structure of this mid-bodied wine. The juicy acidity with cherry skin and crushed velvet tannins are balanced with a presence and depth of fruit. Flavours include dark cherry, red cherry pie crust, clove spice and wild strawberry. All this is capped by a saline undertone that leads to a tapered finish.



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