

## 2018 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: 2.47 tons selected from 2 small parcels of Pinot Noir.

OVERVIEW: 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 those special places.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 28th February – 5th March 2018    Brix at Harvest: 23.30 – 23.60

SEASON: The trend of below average winter-rainfall which begun in the winter of 2015 persisted in the winter of 2017. Thus, soils were drier and cover crops less established as the 2018 season began. However, this must be seen in the context of the cooler climates such as the Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge. Whilst rainfall was reduced, there was still enough going into season. However, crop sizes were smaller due to less ground water being available for the tap roots. In addition, wet, cool and windy weather during flowering meant less fruit was pollinated. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are especially sensitive to a poor flowering environment. As an upside, the smaller berries delivered high aromatic intensity and good colour for the reds. During the vegetative period, there were some warm days but no damaging heatwaves and on average the growing season was cooler resulting in smaller bunch sizes and decent acidities. In what seems to have become a trend, we again experienced sporadic showers during the growing season, providing some relief in terms of water, vapour pressure deficit and temperature. The cooler weather meant slower ripening, and this allowed the vines to accumulate the important secondary metabolites that are the hallmark of noble cultivars interacting with well-matched terroir.

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 délestage 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 10-12 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 generally necessary, 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 2018 was 16.3% new oak; 64.6% 228 l and 35.4% 500 l.

ALCOHOL: 13.50%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 1708 bottles were produced.

TASTING PROFILE: Captivating floral attributes underscored by purity, focus and freshness framed by fine powder tannins yet cushioned by a succulent texture and flavours of black cherry, pomegranate, rose petal and raspberry.



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