

Alto Rouge 2005

Colour: Dark ruby.

Aromas of tobacco and dark chocolate with blackcurrant plums and a hint of oak spice.

Taste: A big full wine with tobacco, chocolate, toast and vanilla flavours. The tannins give the wine complexity and excellent ageing potential.

The winemaker recommends serving it with simply flavoured red meats, game and duck or enjoying on its own..

variety : Merlot | 45% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Cabernet Franc, 15% Shiraz

winery : Alto Estate

winemaker : Schalk van der Westhuizen

wine of origin : Coastal

analysis : alc : 13.32 % vol rs : 2.7 g/l pH : 3.45 ta : 5.5 g/l

type : Red **style** : Dry **body** : Medium **wooded**

pack : Bottle **closure** : Cork

in the vineyard : Background

Alto, situated on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain in the Stellenbosch district, dates back to 1693 when it was part of a much larger farm called Groenriver (Green River), granted to a free burgher by Governor Simon van der Stel. In 1919 the owner of the farm, Hennie Malan, sold off half the land to his brother-in-law and set about planting vines on his remaining portion, focusing exclusively on red varieties. He named the smaller farm "Alto", a reference to its altitude (some slopes rise as high as 500 metres above sea-level) and his striving for excellence.

Today Alto has 93 hectares under vines. The trellised vineyards cling to the high granite slopes that are ideal for the cultivation of red varieties. Alto still has a very focused product list, namely the well-known Alto Rouge, Alto Cabernet Sauvignon and more recently an award-winning Alto Shiraz which has been added to the list.

The vineyards (viticulturist: Eben Archer)

All four varietals were handpicked from trellised vineyards, growing in Hutton and Glenrosa soils. The vineyards, all north or northwest facing, are situated against the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain at 160m to 500m above sea level and benefit from the cooling effect of the afternoon maritime breezes during the ripening season.

At the time of picking the vines were between 6 to 21 years old with an average yield of 4 tons per hectare.

The Merlot yielded 5 tons per hectare, the Cabernet Sauvignon between 4 and 5 tons, while the Shiraz and Cabernet Franc produced only 3 tons per hectare.

about the harvest: The four varieties, which ripen at different times, were harvested at between 23° and 27° Baling.

Alto Estate

Stellenbosch

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