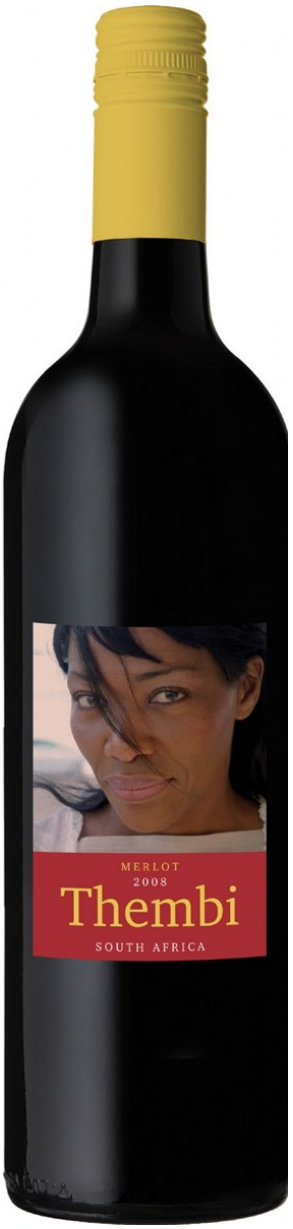
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Thembi Merlot 2008

Red berries with a hint of mint, complemented by soft oak flavours. Also exhibits an impressive ripe fruit core with firm, but soft tannins.



variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot
winery :
winemaker : Thembi Tobie
wine of origin :
analysis : **alc :** 13.5 % vol **rs :** 4.3 g/l **pH :** 3.3 **ta :** 5.8 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **wooded**
pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : The core of our grape supply is from select vineyards in Paarl. In the New World almost everyone can theoretically claim superior terroir since there is no regulation over the claim. We prefer to focus on the merits of what we call "regionality".

The Paarl Wine Route is also known as "The Red Route" for its legendary red wines. Merlot is probably the most difficult of the red varietals to grow successfully in our area, and therefore our production is limited. However, we have a few vineyards that consistently produce Merlot of the highest quality. These vineyards are trellised and planted in deep red soils of high potential and with good water retention capability. They require crop control, especially when the winter was cold and wet. The vineyards are found in valleys (where the higher potential soils are found), or on similar expositions than Sauvignon Blanc, normally planted just below the Sauvignon Blanc.

about the harvest: The grapes are normally harvested at approximately 24° - 25° Balling.

in the cellar : After harvesting the grapes are destemmed and then fermented in stainless steel tanks. Grapes are "cold soaked" for 24 hours before fermentation is allowed to take place. We use natural fermentation where possible, allowing for more complexity and a broader spectrum of aromas and flavours. We favour a more aerobic approach, and emulate traditional daily punch downs by initially using compressed air. Later in the fermentation we change to normal pump overs, also reducing the number from three to once daily. A portion of the wine (up to 40%), is fermented with oak staves. A further portion is barrel matured for approx 10 - 12 months, using 2nd , 3rd & 4th fill 300l barrels. Fermentation temperatures are allowed to be slightly higher than the standard norm (up to 26° C), facilitating the natural fermentation. Only free run juice is used.