

Middelvlei Pinotage/Merlot 2004

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The appearance is bright garnet red with shades of crimson. On the nose you'll find rich aromas of plums and blackcurrant backed by mild wooded spices. The wine is medium-bodied with concentrated berry flavours, well-structured tannins and a delightful lingering aftertaste.

variety : Pinotage | 50% Pinotage, 50% Merlot

winery : Middelvlei Wines

winemaker : Tinnie Momberg

wine of origin : Devon Valley

analysis : alc : 13.8 % vol rs : 2.7 g/l pH : 3.6 ta : 6.4 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : The Pinotage grape is unique to South Africa and is derived from the noble Pinot Noir and Cinsaut (formerly called Hermitage) varieties. The Mombergs are amongst the foremost producers of Pinotage wines.

At Middelvlei, 24 hectares are devoted to Pinotage, planted at an average of 3704 vines per hectare. The vines, grafted onto Richter 99 rootstock, were planted in 1962, 1975 and 1996. The vineyards face west, at an altitude of around 160m above sea level. The bush vines are severely pruned to inhibit prolific growth.

The Merlot vines on Middelvlei were planted in 2001 and cover 6 hectares. They were grafted onto rootstock Richter 99 and are also situated at around 160m above sea level, facing southwest.

The rainfall during the winter before the vintage, as well as the growing season (September - December) was less than average. The annual rainfall was 680mm for the 2003/2004 season compared to the long-term annual average of 700mm.

about the harvest: The Pinotage grapes used in this superior blend were harvested between 9 February and 4 March 2004, with the grapes at an average sugar level of 24° Balling. They were picked by hand between 06h00 and 18h00 and placed in small baskets to prevent bruising.

The Merlot grapes were harvested between 12 February and 16 February 2004.

in the cellar : In the cellar, the juice of both varieties was fermented on the skins for four days in open cement tanks at 26° C (both varieties). The yeast type used for inoculation was WE 372. The wines also underwent secondary malolactic fermentation. Before wood maturation the wine was blended in a ratio of 50% Pinotage to 50% Merlot. The wine was matured in second fill oak barrels for 16 months - 80% in French oak and 20% in American oak.

Bottled: 23 January 2006

