

## Middelvlei Pinotage/Merlot 2008

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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 : 13.6 % vol   rs : 2.9 g/l   pH : 3.6   ta : 5.7 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 Momberg's are amongst the foremost producers of Pinotage wines.

At Middelvlei, 24 hectares are devoted to Pinotage, planted at an average of 3700 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 2007/2008 season compared to the long-term annual average of 700mm.

**about the harvest**: The Pinotage grapes used in this superior blend were harvested in February 2008, with the grapes at an average sugar level of 23.5° Balling. They were picked by hand between 06h00 and 18h00 and placed in small baskets to prevent bruising.

The Merlot grapes were harvested in February and March 2008.

**in the cellar** : The juice of both varieties was fermented (at 24° C) on the skins for four days in open cement tanks. The yeast type WE 372 was used for inoculation. The wines also underwent malolactic fermentation. The wine was matured in 2nd-fill oak barrels for 12 months (85% French oak and 15% American oak), after which blending took place. The blend has equal parts of Pinotage and Merlot.

Bottled: October 2009

