

Middelvlei Pinotage/Merlot 2002

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Appearance: Bright garnet red with shades of crimson.

Nose: Rich aromatic flavours of plums and blackcurrant backed by mild wooded spices.

Palate: Medium-bodied wine with concentrated berry flavours. Well structured tannins and a delightful lingering aftertaste.

variety : Pinotage | 55% Pinotage 45% Merlot

winery : Middelvlei Wines

winemaker : Tinnie Momberg

wine of origin : Devon Valley

analysis : alc : 14.1 % vol pH : 3.85 ta : 5.3 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork



in the vineyard : Pinotage Merlot 2002

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

At Middelvlei, 24.24 ha are devoted to Pinotage, planted at 3 704 per ha. The vines, grafted onto Richter 99 rootstock, were planted in 1962, 1975 and 1996. The vineyards face west and are situated at an altitude of 160 m above sea-level. The vines, grown as bush vines, are severely pruned to inhibit their prolific growth.

The Merlot vines on Middelvlei were planted in 1986 and 1988 and cover 9,88 ha. They were grafted on rootstock Richter 99 and are situated at an altitude of 160 m above sea-level, facing southwest.

The rainfall during the winter before the vintage, as well as the growing season (September - December), was higher than the long-term figures. The annual rainfall was 1008mm for the 2 001/2002 season compared to the long-term annual rainfall of 700mm.

about the harvest: The Pinotage grapes used in this superior blend were harvested between 29 January and 25 February 2002, with the grapes at an average sugar level of 25° Balling. They were picked by hand between 06:00 and 18:00 and placed in small baskets to prevent bruising.

The Merlot grapes were harvested between 26 February and 5 March 2002.

in the cellar : In the cellar, the juice of both varieties was fermented on the skins for 5 and 6 days respectively 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. After 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 18 months - 85% in French oak and 5% in American oak.

Date Bottled: 13 August 2004.