

Middelvlei Pinotage/Merlot 1999

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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 | 60% Pinotage 40% Merlot

winery : Middelvlei Wines

winemaker : Tinnie Momberg

wine of origin : Devon Valley

analysis : alc : 12.29 % vol pH : 3.67 ta : 5.3 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork



in the vineyard : Pinotage Merlot 1999

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 lower than the long-term figures. The annual rainfall was 663mm for the 1998/1999 season compared to the long-term annual rainfall of 734mm.

about the harvest: The Pinotage grapes used in this superior blend were harvested between 4 February and 18 February 1999, 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 18 February and 8 March 1999.

in the cellar : In the cellar, the juice of both varieties was fermented on the skins for 3 and 4 days respectively in open cement tanks at 27° C (Pinotage) and 24° C (Merlot). 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 60% Pinotage to 40% Merlot. The wine was matured in second fill French oak for 12 months.

Date Bottled: 7 August 2000.