

Middelvlei Pinotage/Merlot 1996

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Appearance: Bright garnet red with shades of crimson.

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

Palate: Medium- to full-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 : 12.65 % vol pH : 3.58 ta : 5.5 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

Middelvlei Pinotage Merlot 1996 was awarded a Double Gold Veritas award in 1998.

in the vineyard : Pinotage/Merlot 1996

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, 17 ha are devoted to Pinotage, planted at 3 704 per ha. The vines, grafted onto Richter 99 rootstock, were on average 28 years old in the vintage year. 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 are planted in a 19.1 ha block, at 3.704 vines per hectare. Planted in 1987, these trellised vines were nine years old in the vintage year. They were grafted on rootstock Richter 99 and are situated at an altitude of 160 m above sea-level, facing southwest.

The entire 1995 - 96 season was very wet with an average rainfall of 763mm. The Merlot grapes were harvested by hand between 2 February and 12 March 1996, when the sugar level was 23.5° Balling.

about the harvest: The Pinotage grapes used in this superior blend were harvested between 6 and 8 March 1996, with the grapes at an average sugar level of 23° Balling. They were picked by hand between 06:00 and 18:00 and placed in small baskets to prevent bruising.

in the cellar : In the cellar, the juice of both varieties was fermented on the skins for 5 days in open cement tanks at 26° C. The yeast type used for inoculation was WE 372. The wines also underwent a secondary malolactic fermentation. After wood maturation, blending will take place in a ratio of 50% Pinotage to 50% Merlot. The wine will be in wood for a total of 12 months in third fill small oak.

