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Alto Rouge 2008

Colour: Dark ruby.
Bouquet: Powerfull berry fruit with cigar box and dark chocolate followed by vanilla and oak spices.
Taste: Full-bodied with appealing blackberry flavours followed by tobacco, chocolate, toast and vanilla and a good tannic structure adding complexity and long maturation potential.

Excellent on its own or served with simply- flavoured red meat, game and duck dishes.



variety : Merlot | 47% Shiraz,42% Cabernet Franc, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon
winery : Alto Estate
winemaker : Schalk van der Westhuizen
wine of origin : Coastal
analysis : **alc :** 14.21 % vol **rs :** 2.1 g/l **pH :** 3.5 **ta :** 5.76 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Medium **wooded**
pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : Background
Alto, situated on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain in the Stellenbosch district, dates back to 1693 when it was part of a much larger farm called Groenriver (Green River), granted to a free burgher by Governor Simon van der Stel. In 1919 the owner of the farm, Hennie Malan, sold off half the land to his brother-in-law and set about planting vines on his remaining portion, focusing exclusively on red varieties. He named the smaller farm "Alto", a reference to its altitude (some slopes rise as high as 500 metres above sea-level) and his striving for excellence.

Today Alto has 93 hectares under vines. The trellised vineyards cling to the high granite slopes that are ideal for the cultivation of red varieties. Alto still has a very focused range of products, namely the well-known Alto Rouge, Alto Cabernet Sauvignon and more recently an award-winning Alto Shiraz.

Vineyard Location
All four varietals were handpicked from trellised vineyards, growing in Hutton and Glenrosa soils. The vineyards, all north or north-west facing, are situated against the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain at 160m to 500m above sea level and benefit from the cooling effect of the afternoon maritime breezes during the ripening season.

At the time of picking the vines were between 7 to 23 years old with a yield of between 3 to 5 tons per hectare.
Viticulturist: Eben Archer.

about the harvest: The four varieties, which ripen at different times, were harvested at between 23° and 27° Balling.

in the cellar : Each varietal was vinified separately and fermented on the skins for over seven days at 25° to 27°C in closed stainless-steel tanks. The fermenting mash was pumped over several times a day.

After malolactic fermentation the component wines were aged for 18 months in a combination of first-, second- and third-fill barriques, mostly of French oak, before the blend was made up.

Alto Estate
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