

The Winery of Good Hope Reserve Pinot Noir 2011

This is not a Pinot for those who think good red wine needs to be black, oaky and tannic. It is a fragrant, bright Pinot with wonderful succulence and expressive fruitiness. The successful combination of its earthy, mineral and red berry characters make for a really lovely drinking Pinot, at a very reasonable price. Quite an uncommon combination in these parts for this most magnificent of varieties ...

variety : Pinot Noir | 100% Pinot Noir

winery : The Winery of Good Hope

winemaker : Team Effort

wine of origin : Elgin & Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 13.5 % vol rs : 1.8 g/l pH : 3.5 ta : 5.3 g/l

type : Red **style :** Dry **wooded**

pack : Bottle **closure :** Screwcap

in the vineyard : Several parcels over two individual vineyard sites are used in producing this wine. The first at altitude on the cooler mountain slopes of Elgin, the second on the ocean-facing hilltops in the Stellenbosch-Helderberg area, facing directly into the False Bay Atlantic breezes. The vines are mostly Dijon clones and density, trellising and canopy management conducted in such a manner that the more subtle characters of Pinot could be best expressed. Green harvest thinning was carried-out sufficiently early in the growing cycle, allowing for focused development of a smaller yield (+/- 38 hl / ha). Attention was paid to retaining natural acidity, minerality and purity of fruit. After a winter with less rainfall than normal, the 2011 vintage saw some strange climatic patterns and an uneven, late flowering kicking-off an unusual season. The weird weather continued throughout the season and ultimately, after a hot spell, resulted in an early harvest. This combination, one would expect, would not bode well for fine fruit quality. However, as in 2010, the early ripening varieties - Chenin, Chardonnay, Pinotage, Shiraz and Pinot Noir in particular - gave exceptional quality. So, once more, our Pinot Noir is quite stunning in 2011. Our grapes are always hand picked, into small lug-bins at dawn, and brought promptly and while still cool into the Winery, where they pass-over a sorting table before being destemmed.

about the harvest: Our grapes are always hand picked, into small lug-bins at dawn, and brought promptly and while still cool into the Winery.

in the cellar : The challenge we set ourselves with our Pinot each year is to produce an elegant yet juicy Pinot Noir, in what is, relatively-speaking, a Hot Climate (even though certain claim these vineyard areas to be 'cool climate'). We wanted to capture the delicacy of Pinot while reflecting the modern viticultural improvements in some of the more fruit-driven Dijon clones (here: 777, 115 & 113). Rigorously hand-sorting the fruit, vinifying tiny parcels in micro-open-top 'cuvées' (600L oak barrels) with traditional Burgundian methods was our approach. Even in our climate, it is possible to make wines with balance & finesse. A short pre-fermentation cold-soak kicked us off with each of the parcels, which we fermented separately, up to 3 weeks apart using only natural yeast, the Elgin fruit being harvested last, a couple of weeks after the Stellenbosch fruit. Pump-overs and punch-downs were minimal as we sought to retain elegance and not to over-develop structure. Taking the wine off the skins right after completion of fermentation, the free run juice was placed directly into small, mainly 2nd-, 3rd & 4th fill Burgundian barrels, with only a small proportion of new ones. The pressings were matured separately. Interestingly, right through their maturation, each of the vineyard sites shone through their respective wine and gave a particular dominant facet - the Stellenbosch fruit had a more muscular, dense and earthy Pinot character; the Elgin fruit wonderful juicy cherry and strawberry flavours with clean, mineral acidity and a lingering finish.

