

Radford Dale Freedom Pinot Noir 2011

This Pinot Noir is characterized by its finesse and poise rather than power or richness. It owes its mineral elegance to the soils it grows in and its aromatic berry generosity and depth of flavor to the wonderful climate of Elgin. This Pinot Noir shows remarkable intrigue in its complexity and never fails to enchant with its supple, finely textured palate. We take great pleasure in introducing another vintage of Freedom from one of the most exciting wine regions of the Cape winelands.

The Name

Having grown-up in Burgundy -where the over-regulation of the AOC system and the Zombyfying bureaucracy of the EU act as a maddening straight-jacket to any creativity or innovation- Alex Dale cut loose upon arriving in South Africa in 1994, weeks after Nelson Mandela became the 1st democratically-elected President. Free from EU regulation dictating such aspects as methods of planting, pruning & trellising, levels of yields, residual sugar, acidity, alcohol etc. decreeing even which bottle shape is legal or illegal, and even the fundamental right to plant vines at all, Alex experienced for the very first time the total freedom to act as his heart and mind felt would allow the greatest quality, in this magnificent and untampered-with vinescape. Freedom to challenge ourselves against nature rather than regulation and Freedom to be wrong or right, rather than, absurdly, a regulatory outlaw! In the spirit of an electrifyingly exciting, newly-democratic South Africa, this burst of liberty sewed the seed for the creation of Radford Dale's passionately crafted Freedom Pinot Noir. And as luck would have it, Nelson Mandela had just completed his long walk to freedom and become President that year too...

variety : Pinot Noir | 100% Pinot Noir

winery : The Winery of Good Hope

winemaker : Team Effort

wine of origin : Elgin

analysis : alc : 13 % vol rs : 1.8 g/l pH : 3.52 ta : 5.1 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Screwcap

in the vineyard : After a relatively cold but dry winter, an unseasonably warm August was encountered throughout the Cape. This meant that bud-break generally occurred a week or two earlier for most varieties. Strong winds in December and consequent damage to the young bunches meant a reduction in crop to around 25 to 30hl/Ha, but also meant that not much crop thinning was subsequently required. The three vineyards that produce this Pinot Noir are all planted to the Dijon clones 115 and 777 and have now reached a decade of producing some of the finest grapes of the region. The ripening period in 2011 was marked by an extreme heat wave in February. Fortunately exposure to these conditions could be avoided by keeping a close eye on weather patterns and through careful timing of the harvest. Because of the small yield and cooling impact of altitude on temperatures, the Elgin 2011 crop was characterised by beautiful concentration and soft, fine tannins as well as lovely aromatics.

Elgin is one of the naturally coolest vineyard locations in South Africa. Its altitude (500m – 700m above sea level is considerably higher than the 3-400m of Stellenbosch) benefits the location through naturally lower temperatures and higher rainfall. Here we find a greater degree of cloud cover because of the specific topography of the region that results not only in lower daytime temperatures during summer, but also a more gentle spectrum of sunlight to ripen developing bunches. Also, veraison tends to occur much later in Elgin and only once the hottest summer spells are past. Elgin is an area rich in geological diversity and these vineyards benefit from the finest examples of Table Mountain Sandstone and Cartref soiltypes, which impart a elegant minerality to the wine.

in the cellar : Following a pre-selection process in the vineyards, the grapes are picked by hand at sunrise into 15kg lug-boxes. They are then ferried to our winery on the Helderberg Mountain in Stellenbosch. The half an hour journey carried-out early in



the morning before the sun has time to raise temperatures. Following the triage process, by hand on our sorting table, the crop was then de-stemmed and divided between a number of open-top 600L French oak barrels where a cold soaking of the grapes was conducted before spontaneous fermentation. Cap-punching was carried-out by hand once or twice a day. The emphasis is specifically not on over-extraction, but rather on finesse and depth. As the fermentations drew to a close, but while some residual sugar remained, the free run juice was transferred to 228 Burgundian barrels (1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th fill), where fermentation was completed. The pommace and skins were then pressed by hand in a small basket press and the press juice matured separately. The maturation of the wine, on the lees, lasted for almost 11 months before we assembled the barrels and then bottled without fining or filtration.