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Asara Vineyard Collection Cape Fusion 2011

A fresh profusion of raspberry, mocha and dark berry show on the nose. A fruit sweet entry of juicy red berries, with a mid-palate of mouth filling mocha and dark berries. Ripe red fruits persevere on the finish; a sweetly lingering ending contributed by Malbec.



variety : Pinotage | 46% Pinotage, 32% Shiraz, 22% Malbec
winery : Asara Wine Estate and Hotel
winemaker : Francois Joubert
wine of origin : Stellenbosch
analysis : **alc :** 14.5 % vol **rs :** 3.3 g/l **pH :** 3.55 **ta :** 5.6 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Full **taste :** Fragrant **wooded**
pack : Bottle **size :** 0 **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : The inclusion of Malbec in the Cape Fusion makes this a more unusual take on the Cape Blend; a loosely defined category, where the only mandatory cultivar of the three is South Africa's own Pinotage. Malbec performs especially well on the Asara property, and here it appears in equal proportion with Pinotage and Shiraz. Richly nutrient soils have been chosen for this vineyard, encouraging the deeply coloured, flavoursome fruit to grow. The style of Pinotage sought for the Cape Fusion blend is fresh and elegant, thus the vines are grown at the highest altitude on the Asara property. These grapes have a special affinity to French oak, producing signature mocha tones that yet allow the fruit to remain at the fore. The robustness behind the blend is a single block of Shiraz whose soils enable easy changes to irrigation regime. The vines are stressed during ripening to reduce the fruit size slightly, contributing the structure and spiciness found in the wine. Asara's Cape Fusion is part of the Vineyard Range, whose minimal cellar handling, including whole bunch sorting, enables the fruit to remain true to the vines. Each vineyard block has its place in a vinous history that dates back to 1691.

The Pinotage is grown at 210m, the highest altitude on the farm, overlooking the home of Asara's owner. The soil type is Tukulu, rich in nutrients and moisture, causing the vines to grow with ease and generating the elegance for which the better examples of Pinotage are famed. The vines are planted northwest to southeast, resulting in sun exposure on the grapes twice per day. The Malbec vineyard is grown at 170m on rich Tukulu soils, to encourage the formation of elegant, colour-rich berries. Twice daily sun exposure on the bunches results from their northwest-southeast planting. The Shiraz has been planted at a lower elevation of 100m, to enable its hosting on Oakleaf soils. These are shallower soils, reducing foliage vigour and enabling manipulation through irrigation. The resulting grapes are slightly dehydrated, reducing size and concentrating spiciness, structure and flavour. The average yield is a minimal 6 tons per hectare, concentrating the vineyard efforts on fewer grapes.

about the harvest: Harvested in the cooler hours of morning, the grapes are cooled to 5°C overnight for whole bunch sorting.

in the cellar : The grapes are de-stemmed and whole berry fermented, for optimal preservation of fruit flavour. After a brief fermentation to reduce the extraction of tannins, the wine is placed on French staves for 4-5 months. Malolactic fermentation is generated to develop a creamy texture in the wine. The wine matures in old 225? French barriques to enable optimal fruit preservation. The best of the barrels are selected for the blend, in equal proportions of Pinotage, Shiraz and Malbec. The wines reside in old barriques for a further six months to integrate before bottling.