

Alto Cabernet Sauvignon 1997

A beautifully-crafted wine that is quite a mouthful, but svelte and restrained at the same time. Dark opaque with a cerise rim. Abundant ripe blackberry and plum aromas, with lead pencil, cigar-box, tomato concentrate and aromatic liquorice whiffs. A good integration of peppery-vanilla aromas from the oak. The ripe berry characteristics of the fruit give a hint of what to expect from the palate. A solid structure with a good tannic backbone. A beautiful wine with classic cabernet-fruit flavours of blackcurrant and blackberries, as well as a slight herbaceousness. The peppery character follows through from the nose onto the palate. The finish lingers on. Alto enthusiasts will love this style of cabernet.

It can be enjoyed with or without food. Serve at 18° Celsius with uncluttered dishes such as fine roast lamb or beef, best quality steak or Chateaubriand. Also partner with herb-crusted roasts, stuffed poultry and thin slices of well-matured, air-dried cheeses like a real Parmigiano.

variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

winery : Alto Estate

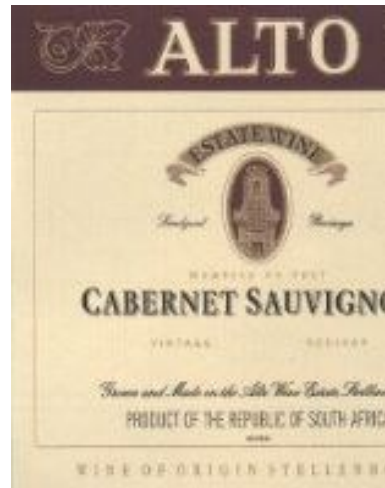
winemaker : Schalk van der Westhuizen

wine of origin : Coastal

analysis : alc : 13.27 % vol rs : 2.0 g/l pH : 3.57 ta : 5.6 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork



ageing : All Alto wines are known for their longevity. Although this wine is easily enjoyed at this stage, the fruit backed by the excellent support will carry it for another 6 to 8 years of cellaring.

in the vineyard : A 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from the CS 46 clone, grafted onto R110 rootstock and planted in deep, red, decomposed granite soil with a clay subsoil. The vineyard blocks are situated at 135 - 475 metres above sea level, facing north. They are between 4 and 15 years old. A four-wire fence was selected to trellis the vines which yielded a low 4 - 6 tons the hectare.

It was a hot year with a rainfall that was far below average. Alto only received 451 mm, but the vines were not irrigated during the growing and ripening season as they did not show any sign of moisture stress.

about the harvest: The grapes were hand-picked in April 1997 after reaching a Balling of 23 - 23.5 degrees.

in the cellar : After destalking and crushing, the mash was fermented in stainless-steel tanks at 28 degrees Celsius, using the selected N96 yeast culture. The juice was separated from the skins after 10 days. After malolactic fermentation, the wine was racked into new French-oak barriques where it spent the next 20 months maturing. After a light sterile sheet-filtering, an egg-white fining was used to "polish" the wine before it was bottled in May 1999. As with all the Alto wines, this Cabernet Sauvignon was first bottle-matured (18 months in this case) before it has been released.

Alto Estate

Stellenbosch

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