

THE FLAGSHIP

PETIT VERDOT 2012

<i>Winemaker:</i>	<i>Abraham de Villiers / Bernard Claassen</i>
<i>Viticulturist:</i>	<i>Francois de Villiers</i>
<i>Cultivar:</i>	<i>100% Petit Verdot</i>
<i>Appellation:</i>	<i>Coastal</i>
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Background

Nature is a fickle mistress. She will tell you a direct lie if she can. But, like most elemental forces, on the rare occasions when she smiles on you, magic happens. We can't predict when nature will favour us with these rare glimpses of perfection, but we can recognise and treat these wines with the respect that true greatness deserves. This is The Flagship.

Vintage conditions:

The 2012 season kicked off with sufficient cold, but a drier winter than usual – in the coastal regions especially.. Abnormally cold and rainy conditions during the second part of flowering resulted in uneven flowering and berry set, with high disease pressure, which producers managed to control satisfactorily. Weather conditions were back to normal in December, and less wind than usual resulted in less damage to grapevines than previous years. The ripening period in February and March was further characterised by ideal, cool weather conditions for slow ripening, resulting in good colour and flavour in red cultivars especially. Very dry weather also contributed to healthy grapes and the absence of diseases and rot. Cooler weather delayed the start of the harvest by about two weeks and the last grapes were crushed two to three weeks later than usual.

Treatment in the vineyards:

This vineyard is planted on a slope of shale. A distinguishing aspect of this vineyard is that it grows very slowly through the season and has just enough growth to ripen the crop to the desired point. Yields are low and concentration of flavours is achieved due to the exceptional vine balance. Tempered by south-easterly winds during the growing season, this vineyard has great character that is reflected in the wine.

The winemaking

Grapes were harvested optimally ripe and hand sorted in the cellar to ensure only the best fruit is used for fermentation. After two days of cold maceration the juice was inoculated with a selected yeast strain. Alcoholic fermentation lasted approximately six days and during that time was pumped over every five hours. Wine was racked off the skins, settled and transferred to barrels where malolactic fermentation took place for three weeks. The wine was then racked and cleaned, and returned to barrels for maturation. During maturation, the wine was racked twice.

Maturation:

The wine was matured for 48 months in oak barrels of which 60% was first-fill.

Total production:

2 751 Bottles

Winemaker's comments

This deep ruby-hued wine offers intense dark cherry and blackcurrant flavours with great fruit purity. It has refreshing acidity and rich, complex savoury support. The palate is rich and juicy with upfront fruit sweetness. The angular tannin structure is well integrated and complements the intense, lingering finish.

Maturation potential

Ready to be enjoyed now with the potential to age further for ten years.

Food pairing

Consider rich cuts of red meat, well-aged cheese or wild game as a food partner to this richly concentrated wine

Chemical analysis

<i>Alcohol:</i>	<i>13.90% by volume</i>
<i>Residual sugar:</i>	<i>1.74 g/l</i>
<i>Total acidity:</i>	<i>6.46g/l</i>
<i>pH:</i>	<i>3.54</i>

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