



ALTO SIGNATURE RED BLEND

2015

Winemaker: Bertho v. d. Westhuizen

Appellation: Stellenbosch

Grape varietals: 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Cabernet Franc, 10% Merlot, 10% Petit Verdot

Winemaker's comments

Colour: Dark, rich and pure.

Bouquet: Powerful berry fruit with cigar box and dark chocolate followed by vanilla and oak spices.

Taste: A true reflection of 2015. Elegant but powerful, medium to full bodied, soft ripe tannins.

General: A stylish princely wine with lovely age.

Food pairing: This wine perfectly complements roasts and casseroles and is excellent served with charcuterie and mature cheeses.

Chemical analysis

Alcohol: 14,7% by vol

Residual sugar: 3,3 g/l

Total acidity: 5,7 g/l

pH: 3,5

Extract: 36 g/l

Background

Alto, situated on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain in the Stellenbosch district, dates back to 1693 when it was part of a much larger farm called Groenrivier (Green River), granted to a free burgher by Governor Simon van der Stel. In 1919 the owner of the farm, Hennie Malan, sold off half the land to his brother-in-law and set about planting vines on his remaining portion, focusing exclusively on red varieties. He named the farm Alto, a reference to its altitude (some slopes rise as high as 500m above sea level) and his striving for excellence. The cellar was built in 1920. Alto has 93 hectares under vines. The trellised vineyards cling to the high granite slopes, ideal for the cultivation of red wine varieties. Harvesting at Alto traditionally only starts at the end of February / beginning March due to the cooling influence of the southerly breezes during this time. This ensures gradual ripening of the grapes and contributes to the development of delicate flavour in the fruit.

Vineyards

This wine is made from grapes of north-facing vines, between 9 and 23 years old, that grow in decomposed granite soils and clay subsoil situated at altitudes of 135m to 500m above sea level. The vines on the higher slopes are fanned by the cooling maritime breezes from nearby False Bay. A seven-wire Perold trellising system is used, which yielded an average of 8 tons per hectare.

Winemaking (winemaker: Bertho v.d. Westhuizen)

The 4 grape varieties used to make up this blend ripen at different times and were harvested at 23° to 26° Balling. Each varietal was vinified separately and fermented on the skins for over seven days at 25° to 27°C in closed stainless-steel tanks. The fermenting mash was pumped over several times a day. After malolactic fermentation the component wines were aged for 18 months in new barriques of French oak, before the desired blend was made.