



# - LAUNCH OF THE 2014 LE VIN DE FRANÇOIS -

19 MARCH 2016

## - TASTING NOTE - Le Vin de François 2014

"Typical deep purple red colour. Super attractively perfumed nose. Complex aromas of exotic fruits, sweet spices, cedar wood, cinnamon & whiffs of dried bananas. The palate is rich and complex with an abundance of fruit, perfectly balanced with the fine tannins and well integrated oak wood flavours. The extremely long and opulent aftertaste promises great maturation potential well into the next decade or two"

Alc. 14,43 vol% | T/A 5,3 g/l | pH 3.63 | R/S 3,6 g/l

Despite a very challenging season characterised by high, and in some instances untimely rainfall, the South African wine industry had a very good harvest in quantity & quality, with exceptional results in especially the coastal regions where all Le Vin de François' components are produced. The harvest being approximately 2.6% larger than the record harvest of 2013.

### GROWING SEASON

During the 'post-harvest period' of April to May 2013 oidium was more prevalent than usual and severely infected grapevines shed their leaves earlier than usual. On the whole conditions were nevertheless favourable and leaf fall occurred at the usual time, accompanied by good accumulation of reserves.

It was a very good winter with sufficient cold and above average rainfall. Except for a warmer spell at the beginning of July, the average temperatures of the year were consistently below the long term average. Good cold units accumulated, thus ensuring favourable bud burst. In June and August especially rainfall was higher than usual. The Stellenbosch region experienced an exceptionally wet June to August, with rainfall in the area exceeding the 48 year average by 160mm!!

The industry experienced a bitterly chilly September, with several cold fronts bringing copious amounts of rain and snow. Bud burst was generally 1 - 2 weeks later than usual, initially very good and even, but more uneven in later grapevines

in the wake of a cold front over the last weekend in September. Initial growth was also slow due to the chilly conditions and low soil temperatures, but the first warm sunny days during the first week of October changed the situation and accelerated shoot growth was observed.

Ideal dry, moderate conditions reigned during ripening in January and mid-February 2014, after which a warm period accelerated ripening and resulted in great pressure on intakes in some areas.

### THE HARVEST

The harvest commenced one to two weeks later than normal, due to late, cold winter conditions and a cooler spring. Above average yields

of exceptional quality were specifically obtained in the coastal regions where one of the wettest seasons in years coincided with an outstanding harvest with regard to crop size and quality, while irrigated areas also achieved good crops despite loss due to rot. However, the Orange River experienced the greatest frost damage in years, which had a substantial effect on the harvest.

### THE WINES

Despite the cold & wet season prior to the harvest, the "Earlier" Red cultivars specifically from the Coastal Regions show intense colour, exceptional flavour and good structure. The best should mature well over the next five years or longer.

## TASTING NOTES OF THE DIFFERENT 'COMPONENT' WINES:

(All from Vintage 2014) Alphabetical order

### 1 | BEYERSKLOOF PINOTAGE Anri Truter | Wine of Origin Stellenbosch

Back in the blend for the 5th time. This famous producer's wine comes from an 18 year old bush-vine block, grown on the gravelly soils of Bottelary outside Stellenbosch. Dry-land farmed with meticulous management of the company. Fermented in open 'kuipe' for 3 days with 2-hourly punch downs until 4<sup>th</sup>B. Then drawn off the skins & blended with its press juice to complete fermentation until dry. MLF and maturation took place in a new 225l Demptos barrel.

"Dark purple colour with hints of Eucalyptus on the nose. Elegant soft fruit and supple tannins results in a super balanced wine with a long finish."

### 2 | DELHEIM PINOTAGE Reg Holder | Wine of Origin Stellenbosch

Making the 'cut' for the 8th time in a row. From two adjoining bush-vine blocks on Vera Cruz. One 18- and one 19 years old. Grown on decomposed granite soils with a South-South Western slope. Made in a 'new' style this year with approximately 60% whole berries in the ferment to enhance fruitiness and softness of tannins. Punched down every three hours during its fermentation in open fermenters. Then racked to barrels before dry to complete alcoholic and Malolactic fermentation.

After 6 months a blend of 50/50 new- and 2nd fill barrels were transferred to this new Vicard 225 l barrel where it spent a further 13 months before landing up in the final Le Vin de François blend.

"Intense deep purple -red colour. Abundance of sweet red- and ripe dark fruit characters on the nose. The complex fruity palate combines perfectly with the elegant tannins to ensure a long pleasing aftertaste"

### 3 | KANONKOP PINOTAGE

Abrie Beeslaar | Wine of Origin Stellenbosch

This world famous Estate's wine has become a regular in this unique blend by contributing this year for the 7th time. The wine originates from a 25 year old dry-land bush-

vineblock, situated on the South-Western slopes of the Simonsberg about 300 metres above sea level and influenced by the cool Atlantic Ocean evening breezes. Harvested on the 20th Feb at full phenolic ripeness and fermented with a combination of two special selected yeast strains. Once again in open 'kuipe' with punch downs every 2 hours for three days. Thereafter transferred to a new Vicard French oak barrique for MLF and a maturation period of 21 months.

"Typical crimson red with purple edges and a big intense nose of black berries and cherries, well intertwined with spiciness from the oak. The full rich palate is supported by a firm structure and ample fine ripe tannins. This component brings the youth and ability to age for many years to this year's special wine"

### 4 | LANZERAC PINOTAGE Wynand Lategan | Wine of Origin Stellenbosch

The second property to have participated every year since the beginning. From the same "oldest Pinotage block" that was used last year, planted on the North-Western slopes of Lanzerac's part of Botmaskop in the Jonkershoek valley. MLF took place in a new small Vicard Chateau Ferree barrel and left to mature for a period of 20 months to reach the perfect balance.

"Very dark opaque colour. An intense nose of black berries and black current with whiffs of mocha. The palate shows lovely concentration of sweet dark fruit and ripe black cherries that lingers on after swallowing, in combination with the balanced tannins and perfectly integrated oak flavours."

### 5 | L'AVENIR PINOTAGE Dirk Coetzee | Wine of Origin Stellenbosch

Two barrels from this wonderful Estate where my dreams of many years ago become a reality. Also the third producer who's wines have made it into the final blend for the 8th consecutive vintage. Both wines from the 23 year-old vineyard planted by yours truly. Picked full pipe and fermented in a stainless steel tank with a specially selected yeast and regular pump overs. After alcoholic fermentation the wine was pumped to a 'new'- and a 'second fill' barrel for MLF and maturation of approximately 18 months.

'New barrel' - "Deep ruby red with a purple edge. Intense nose of ripe plums and black cherries with hints of smokiness and dark chocolate. The rich & complex flavours together with a super tannin structure fills the mouth on swallowing & ensures a long and persistent aftertaste."

'2nd fill barrel' - "Similar colour to above a slightly subdued nose with more sweet fruit and less smokiness and spice from the wood. The palate shows juicy fruit and fine elegant tannins. The combination of the two is a major contributor to the style of Le Vin de François."

### 6 | RHEBOKSKLOOF PINOTAGE Rolanie Lotz - Wine of Origin Paarl

The 2nd time for this producer's wine to be selected as a component. Made in the Rhebokskloof cellar from a neighbouring vineyard's grapes. Fermented with a special yeast selection and regular pump overs until nearly dry before pressing and allowing the fermentation to proceed without extracting any further tannins from the skins & seeds. Thereafter transferred to a new 300 litre French oak barrel to undergo MLF and mature further for a period of approximately 20 months.

"A very deep red colour with beautiful sweet fruit & spice on the nose. The palate has a big complex feel to it with a lot of finesse through the fine tannins and integrated subtle oak characters. This component brings elegance to the final blend without reducing its intense nose and taste."

### 7 | SIMONSIG PINOTAGE Debbie Thompson | Wine of Origin Stellenbosch

Another 7th time component supplier. From the same 19 year old bush-vine block that I have used for the last 4 consecutive vintages. Grown on weathered shale soil in the famous "Redhill" vineyard. Picked full ripe to express maximum fruit character with soft tannins. Matured for 17 months in a new 225 l French oak barrel with tight grain staves, toasted to M+.

"Deep and dark purple red with a nose reminiscent of pot-pourri perfume, ripe black cherries and a touch of sweet vanilla oak. The palate is full flavoured and gentle with superb balance between the fruit and ripe tannins which lingers on the aftertaste."

### 8 | WILDEKRANS PINOTAGE William Wilkinson | Wine of Origin Bot River

This property's wine also becoming a regular feature in the blend, contributing for the 4th time. The 1st wine's grapes from a 10 year old bush-vine vineyard, fermented with "Exotic" yeast strain - MLF and maturation for 14 months in a new 225 l Ambrosia barrel; thereafter racked into a 3rd fill Taransaud barrel for another 6 months maturation.

"Deep red colour. Intense fruit on the nose with fine spice and chocolate from the wood, which is echoed on the palate with a firm structure and fine ripe tannins."

2nd wine - Consisting of a blend from the above bush-vines and a trellised vineyard renowned for its lovely fruit and elegant tannins. Same treatment as above for the first 14 months, but then racked to an older Sylvain barrel to respect the finesse and elegance.

"Deep red colour with a mélange of red & black berries with vanilla oakiness. The palate is full with juicy fruit and soft tannins that ensures a long and smooth finish."



François Naudé

François, the proud old "Affies" boy who qualified and then practised as a pharmacist for 18 years in his home town of Pretoria, before making the break to Stellenbosch where he turned his passionate hobby into an extremely successful career. He first tried his hand at winemaking in 1991 and joined L'Avenir Estate in 1992.

This past chairman of Les Chevaliers du Tastevin de Pretoria (one of the first wine Guilds in South Africa & currently the oldest) and self-taught winemaker has used his unerring instinct and skills as a pharmacist to take on the best winemakers in the world and has proved himself their equal.

He has earned many awards and collected an enthusiastic following at home and abroad, where he has excelled in competitions such as the Chardonnay du Monde and the International Wine and Spirit Competition in London, from which he has brought home the Perold Trophy (for the best Pinotage in the world) three times.

François' L'Avenir Pinotage have also been a winner in the ABSA Top 10 Competition for a record 7 times.

Since his retirement as full time winemaker, he has become a consultant for some of the top wineries in the country and has exclusive access to some of the top Pinotage production for his creation Le Vin de François. Over the past six years since its launch it has gained the reputation as one of the best, if not the best and most exclusive Pinotages in the world.

He is an honorary member of the prestigious Cape Wine Makers Guild, after 10 year's active involvement where his wines made it to the "Auction" every year!

He is also an honorary member of The Pinotage Association and is the current Chairman of the Stellenbosch Wine Circle (the second oldest wine Guild in S.A.)

Five years ago, the 'magic man' as he is often referred to, launched two new ranges of family wines under the "nuts about" and "The Wingnut" labels to complete the picture in the Chateau Naudé Wine Creation stable; currently on hold as his 'passion' lured him back into a permanent industry position.



The wing nut symbolizes the actions of the founder - clasp together ideals of his family with different wines from a variety of terroirs to create a product that contains all the properties of something great; unique, exclusive and a touch of "magic"!

FRANÇOIS NAUDÉ

