Launch & Auction of
Le Vin de François 2015
4 March 2017

TASTING NOTES & INFORMATION OF THE DIFFERENT "COMPONENT WINES" & THEIR TERROIRS.

(All from 2015 vintage in alphabetical order and for the first time since the inaugural 2007, the exact same combination of producers in successive vintages!!)

1. Beyerskloof Pinotage

Winemaker: Anri Truter / WO Stellenbosch

From the famous "Father of modern Pinotage"'s farm we have two components this year.

Firstly, from a 19-year-old Bush-vine block grown on the gravelly soils of Bottelary. Perfectly managed to produce a small concentrated crop of grapes. Fermented in their traditional way in open fermenters with two-hourly punch downs. A blend of free-run and press juice transferred into a new Nadalie French Oak barrique to complete the alcoholic fermentation and undergo MLF before maturation for approx. 16 months.

"Deep and intense colour with a complex nose and perfect integration of subtle oak aromas. The big palate is filled with beautiful fruit and finishes with fine ripe soft tannins"

Secondly, A new French oak barrel picked from the specially selected group of barrels chosen to produce the famous " Diesel" for the 2015 vintage. Similar fermentation - and maturation methods to the previous barrel.

"Same very deep colour with slightly more noticeable oak characters on the nose, but great balance overall with subtle dark chocolate flavours on the taste"

2. Delheim Pinotage

Winemaker: Reg Holder / WO Stellenbosch

From the famous 20 year old 'Protea' bush-vine block on Vera Cruz; consisting of decomposed granite on a South-Western slope facing Table Mountain. This year matured in a new special Boutes "cour" French barrique for approximately 18 months.

"Very deep intense colour with the same intensity on the nose and palate with 'Turkish Delight' coming to mind. Perfectly integrated wood flavours and superb tannins"

3. Kanonkop Pinotage

Winemaker: Abrie Beeslaar / WO Stellenbosch

From the oldest (60 year +) bush-vine block on the farm, made famous through their 'Black Label' wine! A very deserving wine in this year's blend - "great wines for great labels"

"Deep and dark colour with a complexity of red & black fruit flavours. Big and bold tannin structure, yet classic dry and elegant aftertaste."

4. Lanzerac Pinotage

Winemaker: Wynand Lategan / WO Stellenbosch

From the oldest block of Pinotage from this historic farm in Stellenbosch. The vineyard is nestled on the North-Western slopes of Botmaskop in the Jonkershoek valley. A 'special' 2nd fill Vicard barrel was selected to add elegance and balance to this year's wine!!

"Deep purple with intense fruit on the nose and palate with great finesse on the finish – a combination of power and elegance !"

5. L'Avenir Pinotage

Winemaker: Dirk Coetzee / WO Stellenbosch

Two barrels from my old farm where I cut my teeth on this superb cultivar!

The first; from the block that I planted 24 years ago and which delivered the most amazing wines every year. Matured in a new Seguin Moreau 225 litre French oak barrel.

"Typical of the block with ripe black cherries and hints of chocolate with a touch of smokiness on the nose. The palate is big and intense with a persistent aftertaste"

The second new barrel; a blend of components earmarked for their "Single block" and "Provenance" labels.

"Intense fruit on nose and in mouth combined with fine ripe tannins and awesome drinkability."

6. Rhebokskloof Pinotage

Winemaker: Rolanie Lotz / WO Paarl

Once again from this great 'decomposed granite' Pinotage block in Paarl, fermented with a special yeast strain and then transferred to a new "Grand Reserve" French oak barrel from the Boutes Cooperage to undergo MLF and subsequent maturation for a period of 20 months.

"Perfectly integrated oak and well polymerized tannins from the extended maturation, resulting in lovely fruit on nose and palate with soft tannins and drinkability."

7. Simonsig Pinotage

Winemaker: Debbie Thompson / WO Stellenbosch

From the famous 20 year old Redhill vineyard. This bush-vine block is planted on weathered shale soil that producers amazingly perfumed wines every year. Matured in a thin stave 225 litre Vicard Barrel for approx. 17 months.

"Dark purple red with ripe black cherries, sweet vanilla and layers of perfume on the nose. The palate is full-flavored with fruit, spice and ripe tannins contributing to a long and intense aftertaste. Another great example of a magnificent vintage"

8. Wildekrans Pinotage

Winemaker: William Wilkinson / WO Bot River

Another new French oak barrel containing a blend of the wines from the two oldest Bush-vine blocks on Wildekrans. MLF occurred in the barrel and it was then further matured for a total period of nearly 19 months.

"Very deep red with a complex nose of red-and black cherries, ripe plums with nuances of dark chocolate and spicy oak. The palate is big and intense with firm tannins and a persistent classic dry 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.

He first retired as Full-time winemaker at the end of 200 5; then as a consultant to some of the top wineries in the country in 2012, during which time he created Le Vin De François through his exclusive access to most of the top Pinotage production in South Africa. Over the last eight 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.)

Six 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.

LE VIN DE FRANÇOIS
SOUTH AFRICA

The wing nut symbolizes the Auctions of the founder - clasping 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

Tasting note:

Typical Intense deep purple-red colour. Intense and complex nose consisting of a variety of fruits and spices – mostly ripe plums, blackberries and black cherries, combined with the usual touch of ripe bananas and subtle tones of spicy oak characteristics! The full and complex palate ensures an immediate enjoyment of concentrated flavours that is accompanied by superbly ripe and balanced tannins. Perfectly integrated wood flavours allows for a long and complete aftertaste. A classic example of a great vintage with long maturation potential. Drink within the next two to three years and you can carry on drinking for the next 15 years if cellared well!

Alc 14.95 vol%
pH 3.62
T/A 5,4g/l
R/S 2,66g/l

Harvest Report:

2015 Will be remembered as one of the driest and earliest in years, with a somewhat smaller harvest promising exceptional red wines. Kicking off approximately 2 weeks earlier, due to earlier bud break accompanied by a warm and dry windy summer, resulted in one of the best, if not the best harvest in years for Stellenbosch, Paarl and Bot River areas. Lower temperatures at night contributed towards good colour and flavour in especially earlier ripening red cultivars like Pinotage.

Growing Season:

Good reserves were accumulated during the 2014 post-harvest period of April and May. A cold wet winter led to the accumulation of sufficient cold units necessary for very even bud break albeit earlier due to warmer weather in August. Pinotage experienced early flowering and very good berry set. Slightly warmer days and cooler nights occurred during December with somewhat less rain and disease free and healthy grapes resulted from it. The temperatures during January gradually started increasing ripening at the start of the season, causing the grapes to mature earlier. It was cooler during the earlier maturation phase in February, but the very high temperatures during the first week in March picked up the rapid harvesting pace, but luckily all the Pinotages had already fermented or were finishing off fermentation and resting peacefully in the various contributing producer's cellars!!

The Harvest:

Slightly lower than 2014's record harvest! The smaller berries and moderate temperatures during the Pinotage harvest led to good colour and intense flavours in this year's wines. Another exceptional, although difficult harvest for Pinotage in all three Wine of Origin areas for this year's Le Vin de François' wine grapes.

The Wines:

Exceptional wines for 2015 is the order of the day and some winemakers laud this year's harvest as one of their career highlights! "A great year on the gallop" for Stellenbosch and awesome wines from Paarl and Bot River.