

## 2015 PETER'S VISION

### ORIGIN:

Elgin Valley, South Africa

### TASTING NOTES:

Classic, restrained elegance with a mouth filling fruit core and is seamlessly poised with pronounced aromatics of fresh black plums, mulberries, violets and pencil shaving minerality. Tannins are supple and well structured with fresh acidity to support an opulent mid palate for texture and balance.

### PHILOSOPHY:

The approach is classic restraint based on the Bordeaux's right bank blend of Merlot and Cabernet Franc and is styled around the bright fruit paradigm where both varieties are grown in a cool, maritime climate prevailing in the Elgin Valley. Upfront red and black fruit aromatics are driven by careful and meticulous viticulture husbandry to maximise ripening of tannins without compromising fruit freshness.

### VINEYARDS:

Generally, the greatest examples of Merlot and Cabernet Franc are to be found in the Pomerol and St. Emilion regions of France. Merlot is extremely sensitive to heat and water stress which means that a lot of attention to detail in the vineyard is vital. Since Elgin is a lot cooler than most wine grape growing regions in the Western Cape, the vine is less prone to heat stress and the clusters are able to hang longer on the vine for better all round ripeness at lower alcohol levels. The vineyards are grown on predominantly Bokkeveld Shales with a high iron content that is prevalent in the Elgin Valley basin.

The Cabernet Franc component produces fairly large clusters that can ripen unevenly. In order to harvest at optimal ripeness, consistent removal of unripe berries in the vineyard and enough spacing to allow for maximum sun ripening is implemented.

All vines are vertically shoot positioned on 5 wire fence trellis system to support the vine architecture. There are two clones of Merlot used, French and Italian at more or less 50% each. The Italian clone provides the flinty, tobacco and structured backdrop with earthy undertones whereas the French clone provides the black fruit top note for flesh and opulence on the mid palate.

Canopy management is carefully manipulated with the focus on ripening the tannins optimally so that no green tannins are evident at harvest. With this in mind, leaf removal around the bunch zone at the right time is implemented fairly close to harvest, weather permitting. Bunch thinning is also key and bunch selection at veraison is observed.

### WINEMAKING:

Bunches were de-stemmed and slightly crushed. Berries were hand sorted at the crusher. The mash was soaked overnight in 500kg batches before yeast activity began where colour and tannin extraction occurred. A commercial yeast strain best suited to these two varieties was inoculated and fermented in open top vats. Juice and skin were punched down, known as “pigagé”, with a paddle, and turned daily to control even heat distribution between the skin cap on top and must juice below. This process was controlled by hand with no pump or mechanical intervention for focus on each 500kg batch.

Once fermentation was completed, the vats were tasted and selected on tannin and flavour attributes and manually pressed in an 800kg capacity stainless steel basket press. The vat combinations selected were kept as separate fractions to create as many blending profiles as possible for the final assemblage.

The wine was matured in all 225 and 300 litre French coopered casks for 16 months and selected casks of both varieties were blended with 86% Merlot and 14% Cabernet Franc. The wine was lightly filtered to bottle.

#### ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 14.5%; Acidity: 5.58g/l; pH: 3.76; Residual Sugar: 2.21g/l; Extract: 31.0g/l

#### RECOMMENDED FOOD PAIRING:

French Onion soup, Oxtail, Venison, Moroccan tagines, Italian pastas with meat based sauces, Lebanese Lamb, Ostrich.

#### RECOMMENDED BOTTLE MATURATION:

The mineral and gravel-like tannin texture will soften over time. Primary black fruit and spice will become more savoury and gamey as the wine matures. Maturation should peak in 10 years. Serve at 16-18<sup>0</sup> Celsius.

#### ACCOLADES:

Tim Atkin:	94 Points
2018 John Platter Wine Guide:	4 <sup>1/2*</sup>