

# CIRRUS

PINOT NOIR

W.O. CERES PLATEAU

2023

Cirrus Wines, named after the wispy atmospheric clouds, are wines made with fruit from high altitude vineyards in the Witzenberg mountains on the Ceres Plateau. The Pinot Noir 2023 is the fourth vintage of wines made from this unique vineyard on Rietfontein farm. At an altitude of 1026m above sea level, the moderate summers, snowy winters, and intense solar rays create an environment that produces distinctly South African Pinot Noir.

## Climate, Soil & Vines

Pinot Noir clones 115 and 777 are grafted onto the drought-resistant rootstock Richter 110. This rootstock is well suited to the poor, stony soils composed of 60% Glenrosa, 20% Oakleaf, and 20% Mispah. A reasonable clay content retains water in dry years.

Ceres Plateau has a moderate Mediterranean climate, with the high altitude playing a dominant role in fruit development. Higher elevation growing areas see a greater shift in temperature between day and night. Cooler nights allow grapes to conserve acidity, leading to more elegant, age-worthy wines. Cool nights also help to lengthen the growing season, allowing grapes more time to develop on the vine. The density and intensity of solar rays also increase at higher elevations, which forces the fruit to develop a thicker skin, leading to greater colour concentration and stronger tannins.

## Winemaking

We take care to gently handle the grapes in the cellar to preserve the unique characteristics provided by the soil, altitude, and climate. Approximately 70% of the fruit is fermented as whole berries, with the remaining 30% fermented in whole clusters. The whole berries preserve pure fruit flavours and intensity, while the whole clusters aid in the gentle extraction of tannins. Gentle punch downs and pump-overs are performed during fermentation to extract ripe tannins and colour from the relatively thin skins of the Pinot Noir berries. Maturation takes place in seasoned 500l French oak barrels for 14 months, adding structure, complexity, and age-ability to the wine.

## Tasting Notes

Expressive nose of pomegranate, strawberry compote, and undergrowth, layered with sweet spice notes of clove and a delicate hint of violets. On the palate, vibrant acidity balances silky tannins, enhancing intense flavours of black cherry, ripe strawberry, and pink peppercorn. A refined mineral note of wet stone adds complexity, leading to a long, lingering finish of fresh strawberries.



Alcohol: 13.72%

Residual Sugar: 1.9 g/l

Acid: 5.8g/l

pH: 3.36