

# PICK OF THE BUNCH PINOTAGE 2023

*We didn't pick Pinotage; Pinotage picked us. Pick of the Bunch refers to the best in its class. Through years of working with this characterful grape, we have refined our winemaking skills to bring out the best in Pinotage and produce world-class wine. Pinotage was first bottled at Simonsig in 1970 (also making it the first red wine released by Simonsig). This variety thrives in our Stellenbosch terroir and is an integral part of our vineyards. The aim of this proudly South African Pinotage is to accentuate the raspberry fruitiness of the Pinotage grape.*



**Wine of Origin:** Stellenbosch

**Style of Wine:** Lightly wooded, soft and fruity.

**Cultivars:** 100% Pinotage

#### Vintage Description

A cold, dry winter in 2022 led into a prolonged dry spell through spring and early summer. December rains brought welcome relief, aiding fruit set and vine energising the vines. Harvest began unusually early on 11 January—Simonsig's earliest on record. Moderate temperatures followed, making it the second coldest harvest in a decade and creating ideal ripening conditions for exceptional red wines.

#### Winemaking

Grapes were handpicked into crates and delivered to the cellar, where they were destemmed and sorted. In tank, the grapes were cold macerated for two days before being inoculated. A combination of pump-overs and punch-downs was performed during fermentation, with a total time on skins of 6–7 days before being pressed at around 2–5 Balling. Fermentation finished in tank, and the wine also underwent malolactic fermentation in tank. Most of the wine was aged in tank, while a small portion was aged in older barrels for 6–8 months before the final blend was made.

#### Winemaker's Description

This Pinotage wine unveils a captivating experience with a good core of fruit at its heart. Ripe red fruit notes of cranberry and raspberry dominate, lending a succulent and juicy character to the palate. A delightful twist emerges with the addition of dark fruit nuances, adding depth and complexity. The distinctive South African touch is evident in the spicy fynbos undertones, imparting a unique aromatic quality. A subtle savoury note further enriches the flavour profile, creating a harmonious interplay of sweet and savoury elements. The wine is framed by crunchy tannins that provide structure and a textural dimension. This Pinotage is a testament to the artful blending of fruit and spice, offering a memorable tasting experience with its vibrant fruitiness and intriguing layers of flavour.

#### Serving Suggestion

Enjoy with hearty pastas and sundried tomato stew. Alternatively, South African dishes that would benefit from this wine include game dishes such as ostrich steak, Wagyu burgers, pizza and of course a traditional South African braai.

**Analysis:** Alc 13.5% | RS 2.9 g/l | TA 5.4 g/l | pH 3.53