

**Swarthland Mourvèdre 2014**  
Swarthland, Coastal Region, South Africa



Grape Varieties	<b>100% Mourvèdre</b>
Winemaker	<b>Charl du Plessis</b>
Closure	<b>Natural Cork</b>
ABV	<b>14.5%</b>
Residual Sugar	<b>2.9g/L</b>
Acidity	<b>5g/L</b>
Wine pH	<b>3.65</b>
Bottle Sizes	<b>75cl</b>
Notes	<b>Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan</b>

## PRODUCER

Charles Back was a pioneer in the Swarthland when he started Spice Route in 1998. "Without [Charles]...the Swarthland would still be regarded as a rural backwater" wrote Tim Atkin. Today, the region is the source of many of South Africa's outstanding wines, yet Spice Route remains one of the best and most credible producers in the region, due largely to the fact that they own their own vineyards. Spice Route's 100 hectares of vineyards are situated in Malmesbury and Darling. The former, all bush trained on Malmesbury shale and red clay subsoils (the clay ensures the vineyards are dry grown), give the Grenache and Mourvèdre the intensity of fruit that makes this region so exciting. Winemaker Charl du Plessis has been with Charles for 15 years, and knows the region intimately. The winemaking is 'hands off', as Charl is keen to capture the flavours and structure of the outstanding fruit he has grown.

## VINEYARDS

Mourvèdre is proving to produce some of the most exciting wines in the Swarthland. The grapes were harvested from unirrigated bushvines, which were originally planted in 2001 on deep Koffieklip and Oakleaf soils. The average yield was four tons per hectare.

## VINTAGE

The 2014 harvest commenced one to two weeks later than normal due to late, cold winter conditions and a cooler spring. High rainfall during mid-November and January led to producers having to irrigate much less. Ideal dry, moderate conditions reigned during January through to mid-February, after which a warm period accelerated ripening. This resulted in a higher yield of remarkable quality from Swarthland due to good soil moisture conditions in this mainly dryland area. These grapes were only picked late March 2014, which is recorded as one of the latest ripening vintages to date.

## VINIFICATION

Grapes were hand harvested, destalked and lightly crushed into open concrete fermenters. Manual punch downs were done three times a day during fermentation. Fermentation lasted seven days, after which the wine was pressed off the skins and transferred to old French barrels for malolactic fermentation and 12 months of maturation.

## TASTING NOTES

This wine has aromas of black cherry infused with cardamom and nutmeg on the nose. Intense fruit shows well on the palate, with elegant iron-like tones adding to the savoury character of the wine. It is medium bodied with elegant oak characteristics from the old French barrels.