

# Spice Route

## Spice Route, Swartland Mourvèdre 2015

### PRODUCER

Charles Back was a pioneer in the Swartland when he started Spice Route in 1998. "Without [Charles]...the Swartland 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 producing some of the most exciting wines in the Swartland. 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 2015 harvest had the earliest start in decades. A very wet winter season in 2014 followed by early, warm weather in August resulted in earlier bud burst. A warm, dry and windy summer kept vineyard growth under control and accelerated ripening by approximately two weeks. Smaller berries and cool temperatures during the harvest season in the Swartland region led to a concentration of flavour and colour, which holds great promise in terms of quality. Harvest began on 21st January and lasted for two days.

### 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 and American barrels for malolactic fermentation and 14 months ageing.

### TASTING NOTES

This wine has aromas of black cherry infused with cardamom and nutmeg on the nose. Intense fruit on the palate, is balanced by savoury character. It is medium bodied with nicely tempered oak.



### VINTAGE INFORMATION

<b>Vintage</b>	2015
<b>Region</b>	Swartland, Coastal Region
<b>Grape Varieties</b>	100% Mourvèdre
<b>Winemaker</b>	Charl du Plessis
<b>Closure</b>	Natural Cork
<b>ABV</b>	14%
<b>Residual Sugar</b>	3.2g/L
<b>Acidity</b>	5.5g/L
<b>Wine pH</b>	3.6
<b>Bottle Sizes</b>	75cl