

Spice Route,  
**Swartland Grenache 2021**  
Swartland, Coastal Region, South Africa

---

*Spice Route*



Grape Varieties	<b>100% Grenache</b>
Winemaker	<b>Charl du Plessis</b>
Closure	<b>Natural Cork</b>
ABV	<b>14%</b>
Residual Sugar	<b>2g/L</b>
Acidity	<b>5.3g/L</b>
Wine pH	<b>3.45</b>
Bottle Sizes	<b>75cl</b>
Notes	<b>Vegetarian, Vegan</b>

## 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

Planted in 2006, these unirrigated bush vines from Amoskuil farm have started to show promising results, with the potential to produce complex wines. Even the antelope that roam wild on the farm have a particular preference for this vineyard, often nibbling on the low-hanging bush vine fruit.

## VINTAGE

Following three years of drought, the 2021 vintage can be seen as a 'cooler' vintage. 91mm of rain fell between September to November 2020. This began to replenish the soil's water reserves and had a positive impact on the quality of the vintage, though yields remained low. Harvest was later than average and resulted in even ripening of concentrated berries.

## VINIFICATION

The hand-picked grapes were fermented in open concrete fermenters with manual punch downs, before they were gently pressed and transferred to old French oak barrels for malolactic fermentation. The wine then spent 16 months maturing in barrel prior to bottling.

## TASTING NOTES

Vibrant ruby in colour. This displays lifted aromas of red berry fruit, white pepper and cardamom on the nose. On the palate, juicy acidity and bright fruit are tempered by subtle spice notes. An elegant and restrained style of Grenache with silky texture and supple tannins.