

Crystallum,

**`Mabalel` Elandskloof Pinot Noir 2023**

Walker Bay, Hemel-en Aarde, Cape South Coast, South Africa



Grape Varieties	<b>100% Pinot Noir</b>
Winemaker	<b>Peter-Allan Finlayson</b>
Closure	<b>Diam</b>
ABV	<b>13%</b>
Residual Sugar	<b>1.8g/L</b>
Acidity	<b>4.9g/L</b>
Wine pH	<b>3.71</b>
Notes	<b>Vegetarian, Vegan</b>

**PRODUCER**

This small winery was established in 2007 by brothers Peter-Allan and Andrew Finlayson. Their father, Peter, was a pioneer in the production of cool climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir at Bouchard Finlayson, so after university it seemed the natural thing for the boys to return home and source some fruit from the Hemel-en-Aarde valley to start their own label. Crystallum is now one of the most highly regarded wineries in South Africa, yet the Finlaysons are determined to make even better wines. Peter-Allan has sourced fruit from some new vineyards, while winemaking has evolved. All of the wines are now fermented using indigenous yeasts and new oak has been reduced to help the bright fruit shine through.

**VINEYARDS**

Fruit for the 'Mabalel' Pinot Noir is sourced exclusively from a unique, high-elevation vineyard in the Elandskloof. The site sits at 700 metres above sea level and rests in what resembles a volcanic crater. The vineyard is surrounded by some of the Cape's highest mountain peaks that are regularly covered by snow during winter. The soil is clay with a lighter topsoil of sandstone and quartz, resulting in late-ripening fruit that develops an elegant and often savoury aroma profile. This is the first Pinot Noir to be produced in this valley.

**VINTAGE**

The 2023 vintage was not without its challenges. A very dry and warm start to the season and early bud break, was followed by cooler and wet weather in mid-December, which prolonged ripening. There was some sporadic rainfall in February, but fortunately, this had less impact on earlier ripening varieties during harvest. The resulting wines are focused and precise but with a slightly riper profile than the preceding vintage.

**VINIFICATION**

The grapes were fermented using only indigenous yeasts. 100% was destemmed, in contrast to the other Crystallum wines. A period of post fermentation maceration enhanced the wine's tannic structure. The wine was then transferred to French oak barrels (20-25% of which were new) where it remained for 11 months before bottling.

**TASTING NOTES**

The 2023 vintage is a bold expression of this high elevation site. It has layered aromas of red plums, candied raspberry, as well as savoury notes of liquorice and sage, typical of this vineyard. Sappy tannins and zippy acidity elongate the finish.