

Master Selection,
Akluj Cabernet Franc/Shiraz 2023
Akluj, Mahārāshtra, India



Grape Varieties **50% Shiraz**
35% Cabernet Franc
15% Cabernet Sauvignon

Winemaker	Giovanni Masi
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	12.5%
Acidity	4.5g/L
Wine pH	3.5
Bottle Sizes	75cl

PRODUCER

This is a joint venture between Piero Masi, a Tuscan winemaker we first came across in the mid-1980s when he worked for Paolo De Marchi at Isole e Olena, and late wine writer, producer and innovator Steven Spurrier, who founded the Wine Society of India on one of his frequent visits. They met through Kapil and Gaurav Sekhri, whose winery, Fratelli Vineyards, is based in Akluj (Mahārāshtra), on the right bank of the Nira River about 170 kilometres south of Pune.

VINEYARDS

First planted in 2008 with cuttings imported from Europe, the winery has around 95 hectares of vineyards over three sites in Akluj. The soils are generally poor with no clay, which reduces vigour, a key factor in managing disease in what is a sub-tropical climate. Yields are half what is usually achieved in India, allowing full ripening before the monsoons arrive. Altitude also plays its part with vineyards up to 550 metres above sea level, resulting in cool nights and ensuring the grapes retain freshness.

VINTAGE

The 2023 vintage saw unusually cold temperatures for Indian standards during December and January. In February, temperatures increased and remained stable until the end of the growing season, favouring the gradual and optimal ripening of the grapes. Sun damage was efficiently avoided and there was less disease pressure thanks to the mild temperature which resulted in fresh and concentrated flavours in the grapes.

VINIFICATION

All three varietals were handpicked and processed separately. Fermentation took place in open French and American oak barrels at a controlled temperature of 25°C and lasted 10-15 days. Each varietal was then aged in stainless steel tanks prior to being blended and bottled.

TASTING NOTES

Bright red fruit on the nose with aromas of Indian spices like black and white pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, and hints of vanilla. Notes of plum and cherry on the palate are accompanied by soft tannins and a round, rich finish.