

Restless River,

`Main Road & Dignity` Hemel-en-Aarde Cabernet Sauvignon 2021

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



PRODUCER

Beginning as a hobby for self-taught winemaker, Craig Wessels, Restless River is now a world-renowned producer of cool climate Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay described by Neal Martin as having "real Burgundian allure". In 2004, Craig and his wife Anne, bought a run-down sheep farm in the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, with a view to raise their family away from the city. By chance, the farm was also home to the area's oldest Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon vines, planted in 1998. Craig began making wine in a small, converted garage on the estate. In 2012 the Restless River wines were officially launched and have continued to impress ever since.

VINEYARDS

The Restless River estate is located in the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley. Here, proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, coastal breezes, regular cloud cover and high elevations, result in some of South Africa's coolest daytime temperatures. The grapes are sourced from three neighbouring sites on the Restless River estate, including the Dignity vineyard, which is the oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard in the region, planted in 1998. Two of the sites are planted on the north-facing mid slopes on decomposed granite soils at 270 metres above sea level. The other site is situated on clay-shale soils at 400 metres above sea level, which results in a long and slow ripening period for complex and concentrated aromatics. The vines are all cordon trained, dry-farmed and managed sustainably.

VINTAGE

2021 was a good quality vintage across South Africa's Western Cape. The wet weather in the Hemel-en-Aarde replenished water reserves before a mild spring and an extended growing season. This resulted in grapes of excellent complexity and concentration. Harvest started late, occurring between 31st March and 15th April.

VINIFICATION

Following hand harvesting, the grapes were 100% destemmed, and 30% were left as whole berries. Fermentation begins with indigenous yeasts in small, open-top oak fermenters, and gentle pump overs and hand punch downs were carried out to ensure integrated, fine tannins. Soft basket pressing into 228L Bordeaux barrels (30% new) for two years. The wine was settled in tank for three months prior to bottling, followed by 21 months in bottle before release.

TASTING NOTES

On the nose, fresh blackberry and damson are underlined by graphite, fynbos, and liquorice. The palate is smooth, with fine-grained tannins and a lingering finish.

Grape Varieties	100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Winemaker	Craig Wessels
Closure	Diam
ABV	14%
Residual Sugar	1.55g/L
Acidity	5.9g/L
Wine pH	3.58
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Sustainable, Vegetarian