



Grape Varieties	100% Mourvèdre
Winemaker	Charl du Plessis
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	13%
Residual Sugar	2.2g/L
Acidity	5.3g/L
Wine pH	3.56
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Certified Organic, Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

Charles Back was a pioneer in the Swarthland when he started Spice Route in 1998. "Without [Charles]...the Swarthland 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

Spice Route is producing some of the most exciting wines in the Swarthland. The grapes were harvested from unirrigated bushvines, which were originally planted in 2001 on deep Koffieklip and Oakleaf soils. The average yield was 3.5 tons per hectare.

VINTAGE

The 2023 growing season in Swarthland was characterised by relatively cool conditions throughout the year and an absence of damaging heat spikes. Despite slightly below-average winter rainfall, the region benefited from the cooler vintage conditions. The reduced water availability necessitated earlier picking than usual, which proved fortuitous as it allowed grapes to be harvested before the late-season rains that affected other regions. This earlier harvest timing resulted in wines with enhanced freshness and more vibrant fruit character.

VINIFICATION

Grapes were hand harvested, de-stemmed and lightly crushed into open concrete fermenters. Regular manual punch downs during the 7-day fermentation period ensured optimal extraction, before the wine was pressed off the skins and transferred to seasoned French and American barrels.

TASTING NOTES

A dark ruby hue in the glass. An impressive bouquet of ripe black cherries and plums, raspberry, cardamom and wild herbs. The palate is intense and opulent with juicy black and red fruit flavours, tempered by a subtle savoury edge. It is medium bodied, with ripe tannins and well-integrated oak.