Momento,

`Piekenierskloof` Grenache Noir 2023

Swartland, Western Cape, South Africa



Grape Varieties	**100% Grenache**
Winemaker	**Marelise Niemann**
Closure	**Diam**
ABV	**13%**
Residual Sugar	**2g/L**
Acidity	**5.1g/L**
Wine pH	**3.54**
Bottle Sizes	**75cl**
Notes	**Vegetarian, Vegan**

PRODUCER

Born out of a passion for Mediterranean varieties and old-vine fruit, Momento is a solo project from dynamic winemaker Marelise Niemann. Marelise earned her stripes as the winemaker at Beaumont Family Wines from 2007 to 2014, sharing cellar space with Crystallum's Peter-Allan Finlayson and Thorne & Daughters' John Thorne-Seccombe. She has also worked in California, Rhône, Burgundy and Portugal. Her fascination with Grenache was sparked while in Priorat in 2010 where, together with winemaker Eben Sadie, she was impressed by the fresh, vibrant fruit produced by the old vines. On her return to South Africa, she began seeking out parcels of old vine Grenache to make her own elegant and soulful wines.

VINEYARDS

The Piekenierskloof is a remote area in the Citrusdal mountains, north of the Swartland. It is home to some of the Western Cape's oldest vineyards. Fruit for Momento's Piekenierskloof Grenache Noir is sourced from two neighbouring dryland bush vine sites. The oldest was planted in 1987. The vines are planted at 750m above sea level on Table Mountain sandstone soils. This high elevation brings cold nights, allowing the grapes to retain high acidity and develop delicate, complex aromatics. The vines' age results in low yields of small, concentrated berries.

VINTAGE

The 2023 vintage saw one of the driest winters on record. The spring brought moderate temperatures but the rainfall remained low. This quickly shifted in December, as the region saw one of the wettest summers of the decade. Good canopy management and disease control were extremely important in maintaining a healthy crop. Harvest resulted in a small yield of very healthy fruit.

VINIFICATION

Marelise follows a 'hands-off' approach in the cellar to produce the purest site expression. After early-morning hand harvesting, the grapes were destemmed into small fermenters with 20% whole clusters and underwent four days of cold soaking on skins before spontaneous fermentation commenced. Hand punch-downs twice daily ensured gentle extraction, followed by a further 10 days of post-fermentation maceration to refine tannin texture. After a total of four weeks on skins, the wine was basket-pressed into older 225-litre French oak barrels for malolactic fermentation and maturation, spending 16 months in barrel. The wine was bottled unfined in August 2023.

TASTING NOTES

The wine opens with earthy, lightly peppery aromatics, layered with notes of fynbos, tomato leaf, red apple skin, and wild strawberry. The palate is taut and red-fruited, showing a grippy texture and an intensity that belies the wine's light colour. Fresh, crunchy, and vivid, it offers a precise expression of its elevated site.