

Restless River,

## `Le Luc` Hemel-en-Aarde Pinot Noir 2023

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



|                 |                                       |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Grape Varieties | <b>100% Pinot Noir</b>                |
| Winemaker       | <b>Craig Wessels</b>                  |
| Closure         | <b>Diam</b>                           |
| ABV             | <b>13%</b>                            |
| Residual Sugar  | <b>1.6g/L</b>                         |
| Acidity         | <b>5.5g/L</b>                         |
| Wine pH         | <b>3.62</b>                           |
| Bottle Sizes    | <b>75cl</b>                           |
| Notes           | <b>Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan</b> |

### 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. Fruit for the 'Le Luc' is sourced from the eponymous vineyard planted in 2013. Craig and the team selected clones 113, 115 and 777, known for their finesse, balance and intensity respectively. The site is situated 250 metres above sea level on the north-facing mid slopes. The soils are rocky and sandy decomposed granite over heavy clay subsoil, just 30cm below the surface, which lends precision and texture. The vines are guyot trained, dry-farmed and managed sustainably.

### VINTAGE

2023 was a winegrower's vintage, beginning with a warm and dry start to the season and early bud break, followed by cooler and wetter conditions in mid-December. This extended ripening and careful viticultural methods were required to ensure fruit quality remained high. Early-ripening varieties were not impacted by the February rains, and the resulting wines were focused with generous characteristics.

### VINIFICATION

Hand-harvested grapes are sorted upon arrival, with 90% gently destemmed. Fermentation begins with indigenous yeasts in small, open-top oak fermenters, and gentle pump overs and punch downs were carried out to ensure integrated, fine tannins. Soft basket pressing into 228L French oak barrels was followed by 12 months ageing in barrel (30% new). The wine is then aged in bottle for another 18 months before it is released.

### TASTING NOTES

On the nose, layers of strawberry, rose petal, black cherry, and earth tones of cloves and wild mushrooms. The palate is intense, with fine-grained tannins and a vibrant mineral quality. The finish is complex and long.