

Restless River,

`Klein Hemel` Hemel-en-Aarde Pinot Noir 2024

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



Grape Varieties	100% Pinot Noir
Winemaker	Craig Wessels
Closure	Diam
ABV	13.5%
Residual Sugar	1.55g/L
Acidity	5.58g/L
Wine pH	3.53
Notes	Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan

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 Pinot Noir is sourced from vineyards planted from 2017 to 2020 on the estate. The site is situated between 240 to 330 metres above sea level on north, east and west facing mid slopes. The vines are guyot trained, dry-farmed and managed sustainably.

VINTAGE

The 2024 vintage in Hemel-en-Aarde was defined by the wettest spring on record and a warm, dry summer. It began with September storms that increased early-season disease pressure, requiring careful vineyard management going into early summer. The warm summer conditions caused the berries to gain concentration and tightened the harvest window. While yields were down, the quality remained high.

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 (20% new). The wine is then aged in bottle for another nine months before it is released.

TASTING NOTES

Pale ruby red in hue. The nose features lifted aromas of rose petal, red cherry, and spice. On the palate, a core of red berries is structured with lively acidity, smooth tannins, and a savoury undertone.