

Restless River,

## `Klein Hemel` Hemel-en-Aarde Chardonnay 2024

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. Fruit for the Chardonnay is sourced from three vineyards planted from 2017 to 2020 on the estate. The vineyards are situated between 240 to 330 metres above sea level on north, east and west facing mid slopes. The rocky soils are decomposed granite over clay, which lends precision and texture. The vines are cordon 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

The hand-harvested Chardonnay was gently whole bunch pressed with an old Vaslin basket press. The juice was left to settle without any additives and was kept at a consistent temperature. Spontaneous fermentation took place in 500L French oak barrels and was left for 12 months in larger Burgundy barrels (5% new). Each plot was vinified separately, and the vessels used for fermentation were chosen carefully according to the particular vineyard characteristics. The wine was then left to settle before bottling, and aged for nine months before release.

### TASTING NOTES

On the nose, aromas of wet stone, citrus peel, and lemon peel precede a palate of vibrant acidity, rounding supple texture, and defined fruit purity lead to a long, intense finish.

Grape Varieties	<b>100% Chardonnay</b>
Winemaker	<b>Craig Wessels</b>
Closure	<b>Diam</b>
ABV	<b>13.5%</b>
Residual Sugar	<b>2.1g/L</b>
Acidity	<b>7.33g/L</b>
Wine pH	<b>3.09</b>
Notes	<b>Sustainable, Vegetarian, Vegan</b>