



# FRANS K Smit

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## WINEMAKER

Frans Smit

## ORIGIN

Stellenbosch Helderberg

## PEAK DRINKING

10 years after harvest

## AWARDS

Tim Atkin Annual South African  
Report 2018 - 94 points



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# 2013

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## Frans K Smit Red Blend

49% Cabernet Sauvignon

35% Merlot

12% Cabernet Franc

4% Shiraz

## WINE ANALYSIS

Alc: 14.65 % vol TA: 5.6 g/l

RS: 3.3 g/l pH: 3.61

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## EAT & DRINK

Complements rich red meat dishes like ribeye, beef roasts and smoky barbeque fillet steaks.

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“The balance, and the refined elegance of this blend, with its long finish, is the result of a growing season that goes down in my books as textbook perfect. A properly wet winter, some spring rain and a dry, mild summer allowed for longer hang-time, followed by quick picking. There’s superb balance between sugar and natural acidity. With all the grapes being of Helderberg origin, we were able to achieve consistency in style. Cabernet Sauvignon was everything we wanted it to be - and more - so we gave it dominance in the blend. Adding Cabernet Franc from a younger vintage in the final blend contributes a freshness and element of surprise.”

- Frans K Smit, Cellar Master, Spier

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## THE MAKER

Frans Smit and his winemaking team have harnessed three centuries of winemaking history, transforming Spier from a small cellar in the 80's into an award-winning Stellenbosch producer. Crafting blends of distinction and identifying regional vineyards that are the jewels of the Cape.

'Respect what the vineyard hands you' is his mantra.

## SOIL & TERROIR

FKS: 'Where you plant is everything. All varieties were from the Helderberg and Stellenbosch which are both close to the sea, but from different slopes and aspects. The cooling afternoon sea breeze extends time on the vine and complexity of taste. It allows the tannins enough time to muster stature. Decomposed granite soils with clay subsoil hold water exceptionally well, making us less reliant on irrigation. Besides being good for the vine, the soil quality reduces dependence on irrigation. It's good, full stop. Minimising our environmental impact is a key priority at Spier, it's part of our philosophy and business intention.'

## THE CRAFTING

FKS: 'We hand-harvest in small lugs – and all processes after picking are carefully controlled by our team. De-stemming and hand-selecting all adds to a great taste, in the end. Every detail is crucial.

The components were mostly fermented in small 600L roller fermenters. We allowed it quite a long time on the skins, giving it time to settle and come into its own.'

## MATURATION

FKS: 'Malolactic fermentation was done in barrel - a period of about 24 months on the lees. Then we made our selections and started blending the components. In the final blend, I decided to add in a small percentage of a slightly younger Cabernet Franc. The fresh, natural component was pleasing. We then sent it back into the barrel for 4 to 5 months, before racking.'

## COLOUR

A deep, vibrant ruby red.

## NOSE & PALATE

FKS: 'You're immediately struck by big cigar box notes on the nose, followed by berries, cherries, a faint sensation of mint in the background and savoury undertones in flavour. The wine is complex and dense in structure with a silky mid-palate and a smooth lengthy finish. The Cabernet Franc brings subtle richness, sweet fruit and creaminess to the palate. In the end analysis, the tannins have an elegant, soft impact thanks to consistency of terroir. This blend combination somehow breaks the mould with wonderfully fresh acidities and good balance, which is natural – not an afterthought.'

## PEAK DRINKING

FKS: 'It's already very accessible, but I'd be happy to give it another year in the bottle. My guess is, we'll really see 2013 shine in about 8 to 10 years.'

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