



RADFORD DALE

FREEDOM PINOT NOIR 2021



IN THE VINEYARDS

The two vineyards that produce this Pinot Noir are planted with the Dijon clones 115 and 777 and has now reached more than a decade of producing some of the finest grapes of the region. Elgin is one of the naturally coolest vineyard locations in South Africa. Its altitude (300m – 400m above sea level is considerably higher than the 150-250m of Stellenbosch) benefits the location through naturally lower temperatures and higher rainfall. Here we find a greater degree of cloud cover because of the specific topography of the region that results not only in lower daytime temperatures during summer, but also a gentler spectrum of sunlight to ripen developing bunches. Also, veraison tends to occur much later in Elgin and only once the hottest summer spells are past. Elgin is an area rich in geological diversity and these vineyards benefit from the finest examples of Table Mountain Sandstone and Cartref soil types, which impart an elegant minerality to the wine. Strong winds in late spring meant a smaller crop with moderate temperatures during ripening. These even cool conditions resulted in lower alcohol levels in this vintage.

IN THE CELLAR

Following a pre-selection process in the vineyards, the grapes are picked by hand at dawn into 15kg lug-boxes. They are then transported to our winery on the Helderberg Mountain in Stellenbosch. Hand sorting is employed to ensure only the best grapes are used. In 2021, whole berry fermentation took place in open top 600L oak barrels, resulting in a wonderfully perfumed fruit expression. By using only hands to punch down the caps, only the finest tannin was extracted during the 10 day maceration. After fermentation, the skins were then basket pressed and the wine transferred directly to a selection of 3rd and 4th fill barrels. Only 10% new oak was used in support of the lovely fruit concentration achieved in the vineyard. The maturation of the wine, on the lees, lasted for almost 10 months before we assembled the barrels and then bottling.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

South Africa is free from the strict regulation found in EU and specifically Burgundy, which dictates such aspects as methods of planting, pruning & trellising, levels of yields, residual sugar, acidity, alcohol etc. decreeing even which bottle shape is legal or illegal, and even the fundamental right to plant vines at all. Alex Dale came to South Africa from Burgundy in 1994, weeks after Nelson Mandela was democratically elected President and experienced for the very first time, the total freedom to act as his heart and mind felt would allow the greatest individualism, in this magnificent and untampered-with vinescape. Freedom to challenge ourselves against nature rather than regulation and Freedom to be wrong or right, rather than, absurdly, a regulatory outlaw! In the spirit of an exciting, newly-democratic South Africa, this burst of liberty sewed the seed for the creation of Radford Dale's passionately crafted Freedom Pinot Noir. And as luck would have it, Nelson Mandela had just completed his long walk to freedom and become President that year too...

A NOTE FROM THE WINEMAKER...

This Pinot Noir is characterised by its finesse and poise rather than power or richness. It owes its mineral elegance to the soils it grows in and its aromatic berry generosity and depth of flavor to the wonderful climate of Elgin. The 2021 marks the 14th vintage of Freedom and as the vineyards continue to mature, so we continue to see more depth and texture with each passing vintage. Also, continued experimentation in the handling of the fruit and better understanding of the terroir and the vineyards have together allowed us to craft a wine that shows the elegance of the variety in a unique style. Fresh and perfumed berry fruits mingle with earthy tones in a complex and compelling nose that urges deeper reflection. The palate shows restraint through the satin texture and perfumed, light berry tones. Refined tannins and fruit concentration round out the mid palate before a clean mineral lift towards the long, tapering finish.

TECHNICAL BITS

VARIETAL	PINOT NOIR	
APPELLATION	<i>Elgin, South Africa</i>	
ANALYSIS	Alcohol	12.5% vol.
	Total acidity	5.1g/l
	pH	3.46
	Residual sugar	1.7g/l



ALL ABOUT INDIVIDUALITY

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