



FRANS K Smit



2015

WINEMAKER
Frans Smit

ORIGIN
Stellenbosch Helderberg

PEAK DRINKING
10 years after harvest

Frans K Smit Red Blend
50% Cabernet Sauvignon
30% Merlot
10% Cabernet Franc
10% Petit Verdot

WINE ANALYSIS
Alc: 14.92% vol TA: 6.1 g/l
RS: 3.2 g/l pH: 3.63

EAT & DRINK

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

“The 2015 will be remembered for many, many years to come. Delivering the total package in terms of weather conditions, it is particularly unique compared to other years for both the Southern and Northern Hemisphere. When everything lines up like it did, with the fairly dry and cool summer that we experienced, the wine is just so much more in balance. All the grapes are of Helderberg origin, so we were able to achieve consistency in style. Cabernet Sauvignon was everything we wanted it to be, so we gave it dominance, and adding a small percentage of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot brought the aroma and structure to this truly Bordeaux-style blend.”

- Frans K Smit, Cellar Master, Spier



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 Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot to make this a true Bordeaux style wine with good aroma and structure. 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, while the Petit Verdot brings the balance and structure. 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 2015 shine in about 8 to 10 years.'
