

THE GREAT RED



The Great SA Wine Company was founded in 2014 by Carl van der Merwe, an acclaimed South African winemaker and Wendy Appelbaum, proprietor of DeMorgenzon Estate in Stellenbosch. The company is a specialist wine producer that only selects grapes from vineyards in the Stellenbosch region. Stellenbosch, with its mountains, hills and close proximity to the ocean, is home to some of the best terroir in South Africa.

The Great Red 2015

The Great Red is an expression of Stellenbosch mountain vineyards. Mature vines benefitting from cooling breezes, produce concentrated fruit that is gently vinified with natural, minimum interventionist winemaking techniques. The use of traditional varieties such as Cinsault and Cabernet Sauvignon, that have been grown in the Cape for centuries, brings a unique freshness and mid palate integrity to the wine. Cabernet Franc brings a perfume and palate intensity to the wine with Petit Verdot giving inky colour and a particular fruit density. The Great Red is made to drink within 5 years from vintage, but further cellaring will definitely see greater complexity developing, as is typical of Cape reds containing Cabernet Sauvignon and Cinsault.

2015 Vintage

2015 was hot and dry, but followed a good winter in the Cape, where soil water reserves had been filled to capacity. The season was extremely early, and on average 2-3 weeks earlier than normal. Fruit ripened quickly and regular vineyard visits had to be made to ensure that sugar levels did not rise too rapidly, ensuring an ideal picking date. The night time temperatures were much lower than normal resulting in acid levels being well preserved. Fruit was therefore harvested at full ripeness but with higher than normal acidity and low pH levels.

Winemaking

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot is destemmed and sorted before being whole berry fermented. Whole berry fermentation preserves fruit and results in less tannin extraction. Gentle punch downs are done for extraction with the emphasis on submerging the cap from time to time as opposed to attempting to extract colour and tannin. The aim is to make a soft, aromatic wine as opposed to a structured tannic wine. Cinsault is naturally fermented partially (50%) whole bunch with bunches being "foot crushed" and the balance being destemmed. After ferment a skin maceration was allowed for up to two weeks, followed by basket pressing. Varietals were aged separately for 12 months, blended and then aged for a further 6 months before being bottled without filtration.

Vineyards

Fruit for the Great Red is sourced from mature vineyards of 15 years and older. Cabernet Sauvignon is sourced from lower altitude foothills of the Simonsberg where some wind protection is offered. This allows the Cabernet Sauvignon to ripen gently, resulting in a softer tannin profile. Cinsault is sourced from a higher lying vineyard on the Bottelary Hills, planted in the early 70's. Small concentrated berries are produced that gives a wonderful fruit concentration and purity. The Cabernet Franc is planted on a gravelly, weathered sandstone soil on the foothills of the Helderberg which gives a very intensely structured wine and a wonderful intensity to the final blend. The Petit Verdot is picked from the Simonsberg where tiny berries result in incredible fruit concentration.



Varietal blend	Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Cabernet Franc & Petit Verdot
Winemaker	Carl van der Merwe
Appellation	Stellenbosch
Alcohol content	14 %
TA	5.5 g/l
pH	3.6



Tasting note

Graphite, bramble fruit, and violets are present on an elegant and perfumed nose. The palate is gentle, soft and approachable, with a lovely mid palate intensity, showing characters of ripe red berry fruits and hints of dry herbs.

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