

Bellingham Bush Vine Pinotage The Bernard Series South Africa 2017

Selected by: MTW Tasting Panel



Final Deductions

VINTAGE 2017

GRAPE Pinotage

GEOGRAPHY Not Europe

COUNTRY South Africa

LARGER REGION Western Cape

SMALLER REGION Coastal Region

SUB REGION Stellenbosch

Rationale

At one time, not so long ago, Pinotage was South Africa's #1 red grape. While it has fallen somewhat out of favor over the recent years (it is now #3 after Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah), it is still beloved by many and inextricably connected to the eno-soul of the country. A cross of Point Noir and Cinsault developed at a time when trying to find a grape that could produce both volume and quality was the goal, Pinotage today celebrates its, at times, quirky flavors, and is both signature and terroir specific to the country. As it has Pinot Noir parentage, the Pinotage grape is delicate, can be volatile, and demands hard work if you want to produce a high-quality example. If it isn't grown correctly, the grape can give off a horrible burnt rubber flavor - a reason why Pinotage has been a dark horse for so long. But the best examples are enticing, unique and seductive. When it's on, Pinotage is about black fruit and licorice. What makes Pinotage so different and unique is that the undertones of rooibos, earthiness, dried leaves, inherent smokiness, and oft-firm tannins.

The Bellingham story starts in 1693 when Hollander Gerrit Janz van Vuuren planted the first 1000 vines on the estate, then known as Bellinchamp ('pretty fields'). It then passed from family to family until 1943, when Bernard and Fredagh Podlashuk purchased the somewhat derelict farm, set about restoring the manor house, gardens and vineyards and effectively pioneered the modern renaissance of the Bellingham Estate in Franschhoek.

Sight

BRIGHTNESS Day Bright

CLARITY Clear

COLOR DEPTH Deep

COLOR Ruby

RIM VARIATION Ruby
Stained Tears: Low

Structure

RESIDUAL SUGAR Dry

ACID Med+

ALCOHOL Med+

TANNIN Med+

TEXTURE Round / Smooth

FINISH Med+

COMPLEXITY Med+

Aroma & Taste

RED FRUIT Cherry / Red Tomato • Red Plum • Red Raspberry • Red / Sour Cherry

Condition: Ripe, Jammy / Candied

BLUE FRUIT Blueberry • Boysenberry *Condition: Ripe*

BLACK FRUIT Black Cherry • Black Plum • Blackberry • Mulberry *Condition: Ripe, Jammy / Candied*

FLORAL Lavender • Violet *Condition: Fresh*

GREEN VEGETABLE Dark Leafy Greens

OTHER VEGETABLE Beet / Beet Root • Cola Nut • Olive (Black) • Fennel / Anise • Mushrooms (Brown)

HERBAL Tobacco Leaf • Chicory • Rosemary • Tea Leaf / Bergamot

OTHER SPICES Licorice (Black) • Soy • Sarsaparilla • Juniper Berry

ORGANIC EARTH Turned Dirt / Potting Soil • Forest Floor

OAK AGING Yes *Oak Intensity: Medium*

OAK INFLUENCE Allspice • Cardamom • Cacao / Chocolate • Clove • Smoke

OXIDATION/NUTTINESS Walnut • Pecan / Brittle