

Pinot Noir 2016

RANGE: SMUGGLERS BOOT - An innovative range that pays tribute to the ingenuity of winemakers past and present.

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Pinot Noir made from French clones PN667, PN115 and PN113

WINE OF ORIGIN: Elgin, Western Cape, South Africa

HISTORY: In 2014, The Smuggler's Boot wines were first released. The name derives from the time of trade embargoes in South Africa when growers & winemakers smuggled grapevine material into the country by hiding the cuttings in Wellington boots. The Smuggler's Boot range celebrates that ingenuity.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 9th – 10h February 2016
Brix at Harvest: 23.70 – 23.95

SEASON: 2016 was notably affected by the weather phenomenon known as El Niño or ENSO (El Niño/Southern Oscillation). Despite winter being fairly dry, it was at least cold with plenty of frosty mornings to allow the vines to go into a proper dormancy. Rain did finally fall in August and September but October, as the ENSO episode took effect, was unusually warm and windy resulting in uneven flowering. This gave rise to smaller berry sizes and with the dry weather, a healthy crop. Further, the hot January affected the ability of the vine to retain much acidity. As a result, the wines have a softer acidity, the fruit concentration is high and the wines have a rounded flavour profile.

WINEMAKING: Handpicked grapes were first bunch sorted on a conveyor before the stems were removed and the destemmed berries sorted to remove jacks and substandard berries. After a 3-day maceration in 500kg open-topped fermenters, the uncrushed grapes began a spontaneous fermentation. A gentle pigeage program was charted and the grapes remained on skins for 10–16 days. The free-run wine was racked to a combination of 50% French oak barrels (10% new) and 50% breathable plastic eggs with the remaining pomace basket-pressed. Malolactic then proceeded followed by a light sulphuring after which the wine was racked off Malolactic lees and returned to cleaned barrels for an 11-month maturation. No finings were necessary and the wine was simply racked and lightly filtered prior to bottling.

ALCOHOL: 13.50%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 1800 bottles

TASTING PROFILE: Attractive strawberry, savoury and star anise spice linger on the nose. Juicy and sumptuous on the mid palate with breadth of flavour offset by a nimbleness of fresh acidity, friable tannins and sinuous mouthfeel, this Pinot unwraps to earthy, fennel, chocolate and a hint of incense to a long supple finish.

FOOD PAIRING: Richard's personal suggestions for dishes include charcuterie, its salt and fat being complemented by the delicate spicy notes and fruit; Pork loin with honey, pepper, and lemon-zest glaze; Carpaccio; duck cassoulet; oven-roasted monkfish with garlic mashed potatoes; seared tuna; wild mushroom risotto; a simple beet salad with some hazelnuts and ricotta cheese; a slice of Brie or Gorgonzola Dolce.

