Pilgrim Wines Bastardo do Castello 2024

Vineyard Information

Perched on a northeastern-facing hill on the slopes of Stellenbosch Mountain, these vines overlook the rolling hills of Stellenbosch toward Table Mountain — a location that has come to define quality in this region. Carefully nurtured and isolated from encroaching leaf roll virus, this small vineyard produces fruit of exceptional concentration and purity. The soils are decomposed red-brown granite, rich yet well-drained, encouraging small, flavour-packed berries and deeply coloured juice.

Only 66 original vines have been found in Stellenbosch — and in this bottle flows the wine that began with them. At the same time, we are seeing the first fruit from the 400 young Bastardo vines we planted in Stellenbosch at the end of 2021. Their yield remains extremely small, but it marks the beginning of our own Bastardo production — a symbolic and hopeful step toward future continuity of this rare variety.

Harvest Report

The 2024 growing season offered a diverse mix of weather patterns. A particularly wet spring (with September 2023 recorded as the wettest in 50 years) kept growers alert in managing vine health and mildew prevention. As summer arrived, warm and dry conditions prevailed, allowing the grapes to ripen evenly and fully.

This combination of ample early moisture and a gentle, dry summer led to fruit of exceptional balance, freshness, and natural acidity. The Bastardo grapes achieved a harmonious combination of ripeness and structure — vivid in colour, vibrant in flavour, and true to their unique varietal signature.

Winemaking Practices

Given the rarity of these vines, minimal intervention was the order of the day. The grapes were hand-harvested and placed whole-bunch into small open-top bins. Gentle foot stomping began the extraction process, followed by a touch of SO_2 to maintain microbial balance.

Fermentation began naturally and progressed slowly, with daily punch-downs to gently extract colour and flavour from the skins. After about a week of fermentation, the wine was pressed and transferred into a single small neutral French oak barrel, where it completed fermentation and began its maturation journey.

Over 14 months, the wine was racked gently between barrels to encourage natural clarification and sedimentation. No filtration was applied, preserving its authentic texture and integrity.

Please note — this wine is made in the most unobtrusive and natural way possible. A light sediment or crystal formation in the bottle is entirely natural and part of its identity.

Tasting Notes

Colour: A luminous ruby-red hue, light and translucent yet full of vibrancy — an elegant, see-through brilliance that captures the variety's distinctive charm.

Nose: Highly fruit-driven and aromatic, the wine opens with sweet red berry tones and confectionary-like notes, evolving into a more layered expression of spice, wild herbs, and floral lift. Hints of fynbos, strawberry compote, and crushed rose petals add complexity and allure.

Palate: Silky, plush, and intensely expressive. The first impression is of juicy red fruit — raspberry, cherry, and pomegranate — followed by subtle notes of earth, wild herbs, and exotic spice. The acidity is bright and persistent, drawing out the flavours and leaving a lingering sense of freshness.
Fine-grained tannins and gentle structure provide balance and focus, while a whisper of natural sweetness rounds out the finish. A beautifully complete, captivatingly delicate red wine — vibrant, textural, and unforgettable.

Analysis

Alc: 14.5% Vol.
pH: 3.65
TA: 5.6 g/l
VA: 1.03 g/l
RS: 3.0 g/l