



Ever since we planted our first Pinot Noir vineyards on the Newton Johnson farm in 2003, we were mindful that it would take years for these vines to find their feet and express any notion of terroir, if any. With each season, as the vines have evolved, our perceptions and expectations of them have evolved with them. Some have reached their ceiling, while others have excelled beyond. The authenticity and consistency to which the Seadragon and Windansea vineyards have defined themselves, has led us to regard them as our top growth vineyards. Their maturity, complexity and singular expression are ably demonstrated in each of these cuvées.

SEADRAGON is our oldest vineyard of Pinot noir and our first glimpse into the possibilities open to this grape variety and its grasp of our soils on this farm. It is the sole component of the first 2008 vintage of the Family Vineyards label and remains the archetype of our style. For us this vineyard, at its best, is the most profound, ornate and complete wine from one parcel that we produce and is unmistakable in its consistency. The wine may be full of succulence, intensity, floral aromatics, delicacy and spice, all brought together with sumptuous grip. It seems as though the roots draw from every component of the soil, from the dark, loose, carbon-rich layers above, to the red iron-rich clay below. As it matures the growth in the vineyard is restrained and easy to handle, and the yield of grapes is small and intensely flavoured.

TASTING NOTES

Seadragon's fine fruits and perfumes are deep and profound. Pure and vivid red fruit embroidered with fresh violet and wilted rose petals, accentuated by the bass tones of dark fruit and earthiness. The thick velvet fruit and texture in the mouth is framed with fine, brittle tannin that reaches long into the finish.

ANALYSIS	Alcohol by volume	14.0 %
	Total Acidity	5.7 g/l
	pH	3.6
	Residual sugar	2.4 g/l

LOCATION & CLIMATE

This vineyard lies mid-slope at an altitude of 260m, in the porphyritic Granite soils of the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley. This appellation ranges from 4 to 8 km in proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. The climate is cool and temperate, where parallel mountain ranges channel the southerly oceangoing winds through the appellation during the summer. These southerly winds in turn create regular sea mists and overcast conditions, moderating the temperatures in the valley. The annual rainfall is 850mm, with 50% falling in the winter months (May – August).

APELLATION	Wine of Origin UPPER HEMEL-EN-AARDE VALLEY
SOIL	The topsoil comprises of fine crystals and fragments of granite with 10% of clay, and parts with a mix of broken-up claystone. Decomposed granite layers underneath are well drained and have a large percentage of coarse fragments and varying clay content (30% - 40%). Root depth reaches up to 1.3m where they reach a dense clay bank, rich in iron.
ASPECT	North facing. Slope of 12%
TRELISSING	7-wire Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP) with movable wires
AGE OF VINES	20 years
PRUNING	Cordon, Single & Double Guyot
VINES PER Ha	2857 - 4000
AVERAGE YIELD	5.2 tons/ha (35 hl/ha)

2022 VINTAGE

Growing Season & Harvesting

The growing season was preceded by a glorious Winter for vine dormancy. Abundant rain from May through to August and 45 chilling portions to a late budbreak in mid-September, ensured an even budbreak and good fertility in the vines. An exceptionally cool Spring produced late flowering from mid to late November, with a storm system causing some wind damage during flowering on 25th November. As December passed into January, the rain disappeared and the sun came out, producing a dry and warmer ripening period for the grapes. The drawn out growing season still culminated in an average ripening period of 107 days from flowering to harvest for both the Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Abundant yields were observed in all varieties and excellent health of the bunches from the drier conditions.

The **Seadragon** vineyard was harvested on the farm on **11th March**.

WEATHER DATA RESPECTIVE TO VINTAGE SEASONS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
DORMANCY / WINTER (June - August)					
Rain (mm)	338	325	202	348	277
Average Temperature (°C)	13,7	14,5	13,6	13,5	13,2
Accumulated Chilling Portions (Dynamic Model)	32	22	28	33	45
VEGETATIVE GROWTH (September - December)					
Rain (mm)	162	160	233	200	197
Average Temperature (°C)	17,5	17,1	16,8	15,9	15,7
Growing Degree Days units (°C)	1002	915	884	790	765
RIPENING (January - February)					
Rain (mm)	91	150	99	46	20
Average Temperature (°C)	21,4	19,4	20	19,8	20,6
Total hours over 30°C	95	22	26	12	57
Growing Degree Days (°C)	732	617	637	614	663

Winemaking

The grapes are packed in to large-surface area crates to limit pressure on the bunches. The day's harvest is cooled down overnight to 8°C in the winery's refrigerated cold room. The bunches are sorted on a conveyor, destemmed, and fall directly to the fermenter (with no crushing). **No sulphur** is used in the winemaking, allowing diverse micro-organisms from the grape itself to flourish unrestrained in the spontaneous fermentation. This parcel also contains a discretionary percentage (varying from **20-30%**) of **whole bunches**. Cold maceration ensues for 6 to 7 days at 8 to 10°C. All parcels are **fermented by spontaneous yeasts**, and only *pigeage* (punching down) applied for extraction. The wine spends approximately 25 days on the skins before pressing. After pressing, it is racked and left to complete its malolactic fermentation and maturation in barrel on its lees.

Maturation & Bottling

Matured for 11 months in barrique (228L) barrels produced in Burgundy and custom made for this vineyard. Tighter grained oak is preferred for subtle flavour, with longer seasoning and slower, lower temperature toasting. **New oak** comprises **33%**. The wine is racked to old wood for another **5 months of élevage**. **No fining or filtration**, and a sulphur adjustment before bottling.

BOTTLES PRODUCED	1 558 x 750ml
BOTTLING DATE	2 June 2023
CELLAR DOOR PRICE	R 800.00
BEST DRINKING	2 – 15 years