



# NEWTON JOHNSON

**2023** WALKER BAY PINOT NOIR

NEWTON JOHNSON VINEYARDS  
R320 HERMANUS WALKER BAY SOUTH AFRICA

Our Walker Bay Pinot Noir is the shadow of our best vineyards, bearing perhaps not the same gravitas, but a level of quality and personality that distinguishes the Hemel-en-Aarde and its surrounds. It is a wine made from younger vines, vineyards on the lower slopes, and other engaging sites in the vicinity.

Farming these vineyards has guided us in terms of their individual strengths and limitations. The younger vines are from vineyards that could in time provide the best quality of all, however at this stage they are more preoccupied with a flirtatious, fruit assertive character with more complexity to come. The vineyards on the lower slopes grow with a little more vigour as their accessibility to water and nutrients in the soil becomes easier. Depth of flavour accumulates as you move up the slope with the cool, superior conditions of our area playing the common thread between all the vineyards.

## TASTING NOTES

Perfumed layers of red fruits; the warm, rich spice and woody notes mingle with earthy mushroom and dried flower characters. The generous and polished palate is gripped with fine, chalky tannins. Ripe raspberry fruit provides some flesh to the mid palate, with long savoury liquorice flavour in the finish.

<b>ANALYSIS</b>	Alcohol by volume	13.9 %
	Total Acidity	5.37 g/l
	pH	3.61
	Residual sugar	1.5 g/l

## LOCATION & CLIMATE

The main vineyard contingents to this wine lie mostly on the south-facing, mid slopes, but includes lower parcels from the northern slope, in the porphyritic Granite soils of the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley and the Bokkeveld Shale soils of the Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge. These appellations range 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).

**APPELLATION** Wine of Origin WALKER BAY

<b>SOIL</b>	Decomposed Granite over red clay subsoil. Clay-rich Bokkeveld shale.
<b>ASPECT</b>	South-East, South-West & North facing. Slopes of 10-12%
<b>TRELISSING</b>	7-wire Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP) with movable wires
<b>AGE OF VINES</b>	16 - 23 years
<b>PRUNING</b>	Cordon and Single Guyot
<b>VINES PER Ha</b>	3333 - 5000
<b>AVERAGE YIELD</b>	4.4 – 5.2 tons/ha (30 - 35 hl/ha)

## 2023 VINTAGE

### *Growing Season & Harvesting*

The growing season was preceded by a fairly marginal Winter for vine dormancy. June saw some good rainfall throughout, followed by drier and mild periods in July that presumably caused some uneven budding in the Chardonnay. A colder August retained the dormancy in the vineyards to a timely budbreak in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September. A drier, windy and quite cool Spring resulted in slow growth in the vine canopy until December when some heat and good rains brought a late flush of vegetal growth. A dry and warm January hastened veraison with conditions looking idyllic, until the first rains arrived in early February as the first grapes arrived. Intermittent rain continued throughout February and March with rain every other day, making it exceedingly difficult to pick grapes and botrytis rot remained a constant threat. Had it not been for the favourable weather in January to bring the grapes and tannins to ripeness, the vintage could have been much worse.

The **Pinot Noir** was harvested from various parcels in the area from **10<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> March**.

### WEATHER DATA RESPECTIVE TO VINTAGE SEASONS

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>DORMANCY / WINTER (June - August)</b>					
Rain (mm)	325	202	348	277	235
Average Temperature (°C)	14,5	13,6	13,5	13,2	13,7
Accumulated Chilling Portions (Dynamic Model)	22	28	33	45	35
<b>VEGETATIVE GROWTH (September - December)</b>					
Rain (mm)	160	233	200	197	152
Average Temperature (°C)	17,1	16,8	15,9	15,7	16,6
Growing Degree Days units (°C)	915	884	790	765	874
<b>RIPENING (January - February)</b>					
Rain (mm)	150	99	46	20	92
Average Temperature (°C)	19,4	20	19,8	20,6	19,9
Total hours over 30°C	22	26	12	57	27
Growing Degree Days (°C)	617	637	614	663	616

### *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 until after malolactic fermentation, allowing diverse micro-organisms from the grape itself to flourish unrestrained in the spontaneous

fermentation. Some parcels also contain a discretionary percentage of whole bunches together with their stems. Cold maceration ensues for 5 to 7 days at 8 to 10°C. All parcels are fermented with indigenous yeasts, and only *pigeage* (punching down) applied for extraction. The wine spends approximately 20 - 25 days on the skins before pressing. After pressing the wine 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 the various vineyards. Tighter grained oak is preferred for subtle flavour, with longer seasoning and slower, lower temperature toasting. **New oak** comprises **11%**. The wine is racked to stainless steel tanks for another 4 months of *élevage*. No fining, coarse filtration and a sulphur adjustment before bottling.

<b>BOTTLES PRODUCED</b>	21 100 x 750ml
<b>BOTTLING DATE</b>	8 May 2024
<b>CELLAR DOOR PRICE</b>	R 320.00
<b>BEST DRINKING</b>	Now – 8 years