



## ALTO CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2005

*Winemaker:* Schalk van der Westhuizen  
*Appellation:* Stellenbosch  
*Grape Varietal:* Cabernet Sauvignon  
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### Background

Alto, situated on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain in the Stellenbosch district, dates back to 1693 when it was part of a much larger farm called *Groenriver* (Green River), granted to a free burgher by Governor Simon van der Stel. In 1919 the owner of the farm, Hennie Malan, sold off half the land to his brother-in-law and set about planting vines on his remaining portion, focusing exclusively on red varieties. He named the smaller farm Alto, a reference to its altitude (some slopes rise as high as 500m above sea level) and his striving for excellence.

Alto has 93 hectares under vines. The trellised vineyards cling to the high granite slopes that are ideal for the cultivation of red wine varieties.

### Vineyard Location

The wine is made from the grapes of unirrigated, north-facing vines between 8 and 19 years. These vines grow in decomposed granite soils and a clay subsoil, at altitudes of 135m and 475m above sea level, with those at the higher levels cooled by False Bay breezes. A five-wire fence was used to trellis the vines, which yielded a low 4 to 5 tons, the hectare.

*Viticulturist:* Eben Archer.

### The winemaking

The grapes were harvested by hand at the end of March at between 24° and 25° Balling. After destalking and crushing, the mash was fermented in stainless steel tanks at between 25° and 27°C, using the selected NT112 yeast culture. The juice was separated from the skins after 10 days. After malolactic fermentation, the wine was racked into first-, second- and third-fill French-oak barrels and matured for 18 months.

### Winemaker's comments

*Colour:* Dark ruby.

*Bouquet:* Ripe berries with dollops of cherries and dark chocolate, with a hint of mint.

*Taste:* A rich and full-bodied palate with the cherries and chocolate following through with a touch of tobacco. The wine has a robust tannin structure.

*Ageing process and potential:* The wine is ready to enjoy now, but will improve for another 8 to 10 years with maturation.

### Food pairing

The winemaker recommends serving it with a carpetbagger steak, roast lamb with rosemary and garlic, and a whole host of red meat stews and casseroles.

### Chemical analysis

*Alcohol:* 15.1% by volume

*Residual sugar:* 3.3 g/l

*Total acidity:* 6.38 g/l

*pH:* 3.44



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