



NEWTON JOHNSON

WALKER BAY PINOT NOIR

2024

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.

ANALYSIS	Alcohol by volume	13.4 %
	Total Acidity	5.8 g/l
	pH	3.46
	Residual sugar	2.1 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

SOIL Decomposed Granite over red clay subsoil. Clay-rich Bokkeveld shale.

ASPECT	South-East, South-West & North facing. Slopes of 10-12%
TRELISSING	7-wire Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP) with movable wires
AGE OF VINES	5 - 23 years
PRUNING	Cordon and Single Guyot
VINES PER Ha	3333 - 5000
AVERAGE YIELD	3.8 – 7.7 tons/ha (26 - 52 hl/ha)

2024 VINTAGE

Growing Season & Harvesting

The peerless 2024 vintage has a close resemblance to a warmer 2017, characterised by its flawless ripening conditions, bringing depth to the wines without being overbearing. The most important precursor was having a decent and uninterrupted winter, seeing ample rain early on and the lowest average temperature since the winter of 2016. Ideal dormancy ensures good fertility in the vines and even budding come springtime. Budding was fairly early due to the early winter, with the first Pinot Noir vineyard starting on 22 August and the last starting on 4 September (Sandford's cooler southern slope). There was plenty of rain early on in September, compounded by the infamous flood that hit the Hemel-en-Aarde on 24 September, delivering over 400mm of rain in 48 hours. Besides the extensive damage to roads, bridges and the course of the Onrus river, the vineyards did not see any damage or disease as the temperatures were still too cold for mildew. The rains had dissipated by November, though the water sodden soil and fine weather fuelled the vegetative growth in the vines and the flowering was excellent. The fine weather continued, turning to some warm days in the high 20's (°C) as veraison was finishing. There were no major rain events approaching harvest and the preceding few weeks of warm weather ensured that tannin ripeness was optimal. The harvest dates for our single Pinot noir vineyards, Windansea and Seadragon, were fairly normal (12 & 13 February respectively), despite the early start to the season, and the length of ripening was enough to develop layers of complex flavour. The length from the middle of flowering to harvest was 101 days for Seadragon and 98 days for Windansea. The **Pinot Noir** for this cuvée was harvested from various parcels from **26th January to 1st March**.

WEATHER DATA RESPECTIVE TO VINTAGE SEASONS

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
DORMANCY / WINTER (June - August)					
Rain (mm)	202	348	277	235	280
Average Temperature (°C)	13.6	13.5	13.2	13.7	12.9
Accumulated Chilling Portions (Dynamic Model)	28	33	45	35	39
VEGETATIVE GROWTH (September - December)					
Rain (mm)	233	200	197	152	378
Average Temperature (°C)	16.8	15.9	15.7	16.6	16.4
Growing Degree Days units (°C)	884	790	765	874	830
RIPENING (January - February)					
Rain (mm)	99	46	20	92	51
Average Temperature (°C)	20	19.8	20.6	19.9	20.6
Total hours over 30°C	26	12	57	27	38
Growing Degree Days (°C)	637	614	663	616	667

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 **9%**. The wine is racked to stainless steel tanks for another 4 months of *élevage*. No fining, coarse filtration and a sulphur adjustment before bottling.

BOTTLES PRODUCED	23 400 x 750ml
BOTTLING DATE	1 April 2025
CELLAR DOOR PRICE	R 350.00
BEST DRINKING	Now – 8 years