

RECORD PRICES AT SEVENTH ANNUAL AUCTION CONFIRM ICONIC STATUS OF LE VIN DE FRANÇOIS

Limited release of unique, handcrafted Pinotage created by one of the wine industry's Pinotage aficionados, François Naudé

To honour the wine industry's talent in producing excellent Pinotage, Francois Naude each year tastes through the cellars of various producers, then selects a barrel of Pinotage from the ones he believes will meet his objective: 'To make the best Pinotage in the World of any given vintage – the crème de la crème to showcase the cultivar in particular.' The very fact that he is given this access speaks volumes about the prestige with which he is regarded in the industry. Chosen producers in 2013 were Delheim, Kanonkop, Lanzerac, L'Avenir, Rhebokskloof, Simonsig and Wildekrans, blended together to create Le Vin de François.

Only sold at a private Auction, a glittering black tie event held at Overgaauw in Stellenbosch on March 14th, the 2013 Le Vin de François went under the hammer for prices as high as R11 400 a case. The distinctively packaged wine was presented in 12-bottle wooden cases, sturdy enough for long haul storage in the connoisseur's private cellar. A limited quantity of Magnums, 3 litres, 5 litres and 1x 9 litre as well as a 27 litre bottle produced as a tribute to matriarch Magda (to whom the auction was dedicated), were also auctioned.

Total sales were R1,390,000, which equated to just over R7 000 average for the 195 cases sold, an increase of 8.2% on last year. Foreign buyers accounted for 28.4% of sales with large volumes going to Botswana, Namibia, France, the UK and Czech Republic and smaller amounts to Germany, Belgium and Holland. The biggest buyer was luxury game lodge Singita, with R170,000's worth of purchases, a record high in the seven years of auctions

At the by-invitation-only event, the 140 guests were treated to oysters and Soutiran Champagne and canapés on arrival, followed by a gourmet 3-course meal prepared by renowned chef Craig Cormack. The wines served were carefully selected to match the food, and included the 2013 Le Vin de François. During the course of the evening guests were entertained by the music of the band U.I.F and after the auction, which started during dinner, singer Beulah Swart sang some of Magda's favourite songs.

As was customary, the proceeds of the artwork sales (paintings with association to the properties of the 'component' producers), together with a case of Le Vin de François 2013 totalling R15 000 in value will be donated to charity, in this case a new one, The Nedbank Cape Winemakers Guild Development Trust to assist in their goal of effecting transformation in the South African wine industry through their successful Protegé Programme. The case of wine will be auctioned at one of their pre-auction Dinners in Johannesburg before the CWG's next auction in October 2015.

Although most of the stock was bought for private collections, 5 cases from the total production of 2400 bottles will be available directly from Chateau Naude Wine Creation. For any further information, contact Melissa Naudé: naude@levindefrancois.co.za