

# SPRINGFIELD ESTATE

The Bruwer family of Springfield Estate in Robertson, South Africa, is known for their singular quest for perfection. Abrie Bruwer is in fact more well known for not releasing vintages, so when something new or different comes along from the estate, you know it will be worth watching out for.

The Méthode Ancienne Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard, planted in 1979, is situated on a small, 2.5ha of incredibly rocky soil, and produces a tiny yield of incredibly complex, concentrated fruit. Nowadays, the Bruwers use whole berry fermentation and no pumps or crushers in their red wine cellar. Back in 1997, still experimenting with the processes, the vintage was pressed after fermentation before going into 100% new oak for two years. This resulted in a wine with a very tight tannin structure, one that they felt needed a lot more time to age and soften until it was ready to drink.

Twenty years is a long time to wait for a wine to be ready to release. With all this time on their hands, Abrie and Jeanette ended up conducting some interesting experiments on wine maturation, even taking things so far as to dump 600 bottles of the vintage, corks covered in wax, off the coast of Cape Agulhas in March 2000 . Shifting currents, lost GPS coordinates and a veil of secrecy over the project meant the 6-month long informal study lasted a little over three years, with the wine finally being found in December 2003.

Next year will mark the 20-year anniversary of the 1997 Méthode Ancient Cabernet vintage, and the Bruwer family have finally deigned it ready for release this December. A pure expression of Cabernet, this wine has a refined elegance and notes of cassis, pencil shavings and violets.

**The Méthode Ancienne 1997, as well as the current vintage, 2011, will be available to taste at the Springfield Estate stand, #38, at Intrepid South on the 8th of September 2016.**

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