

Three Cape Ladies makes history

17 December 2004 by Cowley Nel & Associates

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With the recent announcement of *Wine Spectator's Top 100* wines of 2004, Warwick has made history with their Cape Blend, Three Cape Ladies 2001, featuring at number 71. This is the first time that a Cape Blend, a red blend with Pinotage as an integral component, has made the highly influential top 100.

Mike Ratcliffe and the Warwick team have long been champions of the Cape Blend, giving expression to Pinotage in a red blend through Three Cape Ladies. Ratcliffe contends that "as Pinotage is the only variety that is truly South African, it should also be clear now that in order for a Cape Blend to have intrinsic value as a uniquely South Africa product, it must contain a proportion of Pinotage." He adds that South Africa should capitalise on what is uniquely ours, being Pinotage, and use it as a point of differentiation and diversification - vital in a crowded wine world.

The *Top 100* announcement shows that this approach is paying dividends. The Three Cape Ladies 2001 scored 91 points in *Wine Spectator*.

Tasting for *Wine Spectator*, James Molesworth described it as follows: "Suave wine, with black currant fruit offset by tangy mineral and sanguine notes. Plenty of toast and spice as well, but it's all folded together in a rich, creamy package with a nice tar note on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinotage and Merlot. Drink now through 2006."

Wine Spectator uses four criteria for choosing their *Top 100*. The first three are quality, volume and price; but it is the fourth, namely the "X-factor" that is interesting to note - and a justifiable reason why this Cape Blend has received this recognition. They define the X-factor as excitement, the ability to stimulate and surprise. a wine that is different. The Cape Blend is a wine with such a point of difference "built in".

Warwick's Three Cape Ladies has a proud record and bears testament to their dedication to specialisation and innovation. This recognition also reflects Warwick belief that we should continually measure our Cape wines against the toughest international standards.

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