

LOUW WINES

Elham Valley

PINOT NOIR 2023

Alcohol	13.5%	Clones	777 & 115
TA	6 g/l	Malolactic	Complete
pH	3.38	Oak Maturation	15 months old French oak

VINEYARD

The grapes for this wine come from a single vineyard situated in the Elham Valley, an area defined by its predominantly chalk and flint-rich soils. This site forms part of the same iconic chalk ridge that runs from Champagne through Burgundy and into southern England, offering ideal conditions for growing high-quality Pinot Noir. The vineyard lies on gentle, south-facing slopes at an elevation just under 100 metres, approximately 8 miles from the sea.

VINTAGE

The 2023 growing season was near-perfect in Elham Valley, Kent. Spring saw minimal frost, followed by flowering in June. Although July and August were cooler and wetter than average, extended warmth and sunshine in September and October brought excellent ripening conditions. While many vineyards across the UK reported record-breaking yields, this particular site in the Elham Valley produced a more moderate crop. The lower yield contributed to greater concentration.

HARVEST

Pinot Noir clones 777 and 115 were hand-harvested under moonlight on October 24th. The fruit was carefully selected by ourselves to ensure only the highest quality and healthiest bunches were picked. Special attention was given to sorting, allowing us to work exclusively with pristine grapes.

VINIFICATION

The hand-harvested bunches were destemmed and allowed to cold soak overnight to enhance colour and aromatic extraction. Fermentation began spontaneously as the must gradually warmed and was later supported by the addition of a selected Burgundian yeast strain to ensure a clean, complete ferment with added aromatic complexity. Gentle punch-downs were carried out twice daily to extract colour, fine tannin, and structure. After primary fermentation, the wine was transferred to a fourth fill, medium toasted French oak barrel, where it underwent full malolactic fermentation. The wine remained on its lees in barrel for six months, building mid-palate weight and texture. Following this, it was racked and returned to barrel, with regular topping to preserve freshness and balance.

BOTTLING

After 15 months in barrel, the wine was racked and lightly filtered before being bottled on February 2nd, 2025. All bottling, including corking, was done by hand.

TASTING NOTES

Vibrant aromas of red cherry, ripe strawberries, and bright raspberry. Subtle hints of earthy mushroom and a touch of warming nutmeg spice add layers of complexity, with fine-grained tannins that provide balance and structure.

