

## DE TOREN *Five-varietal Bordeaux blends to dazzle the senses*



Emil and Sonette den Dulk left the bustling metropolis of Johannesburg in 1991 to seek the beauty and serenity of the Cape winelands. They stumbled upon what Emil refers to as “a little piece of heaven” in the Polkadraai Hills, with the magnificent Stellenbosch Mountains as backdrop. It was here that they established De Toren Private Cellar. With the help of specialists from the University of Stellenbosch, Emil set out to carve a niche for his boutique estate by creating South Africa’s first five-varietal Bordeaux blend, the now legendary Fusion V.

Situated on southern facing slopes overlooking False Bay at altitudes of 560 to 655 feet, De Toren enjoys the cooling effect of constant ocean breezes. Approximately 22 of the farm’s 26 hectares are planted to the Bordeaux varietals of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. 18 different clones are grown in ten distinct soil types (the most prevalent being Tukulu/ Pinedene, Sterkspruit and Estcourt), with varietals, clones and rootstocks matched to their ideal soil types following extensive soil studies.

The farm makes use of extensive Infrared Aerial Imaging in order to monitor ripeness in various vineyard blocks and determine optimal picking times. All harvesting is done by hand in the cool early morning hours, and the grapes are transported to the winery in small batches, where they are hand sorted and gently basket pressed. The winery is operated completely on gravity flow principles; a 4,000 liter pressure tank in an elevator shaft (the “Tower” from which the winery takes its name) is used to exploit gravity in transporting wine between tanks and barrels without the use of mechanical pumps. As a result of De Toren’s innovative, minimal intervention production methods, their wines were among the first South African bottlings to qualify for IP (Integrated Production) certification by the Wine and Spirit Board.

Winemaker Albie Koch has been at De Toren’s helm from the very beginning. His maiden 1999 vintage of Fusion V took the international wine world by storm, garnering great critical acclaim and instantly becoming one of the Cape’s most iconic and sought-after bottlings. De Toren “Z” was introduced with the 2004 vintage and has subsequently earned its own fair share of accolades. This Merlot-based “Right Bank” Bordeaux blend provides the perfect complement to the Cabernet-dominant “Left Bank” flagship.

De Toren seems to have found the key to success with their simple winemaking philosophy: gentle handling, no pumps, and minimum manipulation. Armed with this winning formula, the boutique farm has quickly risen to join the ranks of South Africa’s winemaking elite with their dazzling, stylish, and complex five-varietal Bordeaux blends.



**ESTABLISHED:** 1994

**OWNERSHIP:**

Emil and Sonette den Dulk

**WINEMAKER:**

Albie Koch

**LOCATION:** South-facing slopes of the Stellenbosch Hills, at altitudes of 655 to 1,312 feet above sea level

**SOIL TYPE:** Predominantly Tukulu/ Pinedene, Sterkspruit and Estcourt)

**SIZE OF ESTATE:** 64 acres, of which 54 are planted to vines

**THE NAME:**

De Toren is Dutch for “the tower.” The name refers to the winery structure which allows for gravity flow winemaking.

**WINES IMPORTED:**

Fusion V, “Z”