

La Motte Wine Estate

South Africa - Western Cape

In 1695, a piece of land in the Franschhoek Valley was granted to German immigrant Hans Hendrik Hattingh. In 1709, the land was purchased by La Motte's first French Huguenot owner, Pierre Joubert. The name La Motte has its origin from a little village in Provence – La Motte d'Aigues.

Viticulture on La Motte was established in 1752 with the planting of 4,000 vines by Huguenot descendant Gabriël du Toit. In 1970 the farm was bought by Dr. Anton Rupert and a major development, restoration and conservation programme followed, which reinvented La Motte into a leading global wine producer and sought-after tourist destination.

Vineyards have been progressively replanted with noble varieties, the latest viticultural practices have been introduced and a modern cellar has been built.

Today, La Motte Wine Estate is operated under the guidance of owner Hanneli Rupert-Koegelenberg and her husband Hein Koegelenberg, Chief Executive Officer of the estate.

La Motte boasts four provincial monuments (previously known as national) – the Manor House (c1751), Jonkershuis (c1752), Historic Cellar (c1782) and the Water Mill (erected between 1752 and 1793). All the structures have been fully restored following the purchase of La Motte by Dr. Anton Rupert in 1970. The Water Mill, used for the production of stone-ground flour, is the only working water mill of its kind in the Franschhoek Valley. Across the road a small, humble building, known as the Veepos (cattle post), dates back to the first half of the 18th century. The La Motte cemetery, reserved for burials of Franschhoek residents since the late 18th century, is a recently restored historic site on the estate.

Environmental management is a high priority at La Motte and is factored into the long-term strategy as well as daily running of the estate. Examples of environmental care include the protection of precious natural flora known as 'fynbos' on the adjoining Wemmershoek mountains and adherence to biologic principles in the production of grapes, flowers and ethereal oils.

La Motte was one of the first wine estates to be awarded the coveted ISO 14001 Environmental Management Certification. The estate also complies with IPW, is a member of the Green Mountain Eco Route in the Groenlandberg area, and is a WWF Conservation Champion. La Motte, as well as its Nabot farm in the Walker Bay coastal area, are committed to biologic farming principles.

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Hanneli RUPERT-KOEGELENBERG