

RIDGEBACK

RIDGEBACK MERLOT 2014

VITICULTURE:

The North- South facing vineyards used for this wine are grown in deep Oakleaf soils and are vertically shoot positioned. The Merlot clone is MO343 grafted onto Paulsen rootstock. Irrigation is monitored and scheduled according to soil moisture availability. Early leaf plucking in the bunch zone and a narrow canopy enables sufficient sunlight penetration into the canopy ensuring ripe tannins and optimal flavour at harvest.

HARVEST:

- Grapes were handpicked on 17 and 28 February 2014.
- Bunches were healthy and harvested at optimal berry and seed ripeness.
- Analysis:

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|---------|------------------------|
| Sugar | : 24.9 – 25.2° Balling |
| Acidity | : 5.45g/l |
| pH | : 3.65 |

WINEMAKING:

- The bunches were destemmed onto the sorting table ensuring the removal of all stalks and retaining a whole berry component of 30% in the fermenter.
- The mash was then cold soaked overnight at 12 degrees Celsius.
- Fermentation was done in open stainless steel fermenters at 24-28 degrees Celsius using a commercial yeast strain specifically suited to the cultivar.
- Pumpovers were done 3-4 times daily to extract flavour and tannins for structure. The wine also received a rack and return.
- The mash was pressed immediately after primary fermentation was completed.
- The wine was gravity fed to 225l barrels after secondary or Malo-lactic fermentation.
- Maturation in 28% new, 42% second fill and 30% third fill French oak barrels lasted for 18 months and the wine was then lightly filtered prior to bottling.

TASTING NOTES:

Intense aromatics of dark plum, mulberry and liquorice with a hint of mint. A generously juicy midpalate is well cradled by ripe tannin and lingering pepper wood spice on the long finish.

FOOD PAIRING:

The bold structure of this Merlot ensures versatility and would pair well with a wide range of game, especially ostrich.

BOTTLE ANALYSIS:

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|----------------|-----------|---------------|---------------------|
| Alcohol | : 14.0% | Bottling date | : 24 August 2014 |
| Residual Sugar | : 2.4g/l | Release Date | : July 2016 |
| pH | : 3.65 | Production | : 12 462 (2077 x 6) |
| Total acidity | : 5.9g/l | Cellaring | : 8 to 10 years |
| Total Extract | : 34.4g/l | Origin | : Paarl |
| TSO2 | : 85mg/l | IPW | : Yes |
| | | WIETA | : Yes |