

RIDGEBACK

RIDGEBACK MERLOT 2018

VITICULTURE:

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

HARVEST:

- Grapes were handpicked between 19 and 26 February 2018.
- Bunches were healthy and harvested at optimal berry and seed ripeness.
- Analysis:
 - Sugar : 24.9 – 25.3° Balling
 - Acidity : 5.65g/l
 - pH : 3.60

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 mash was pressed immediately after primary fermentation was completed to avoid harsh tannin extraction.
- The wine was gravity fed to 225l French oak barrels after Malo-lactic fermentation.
- Maturation in 29% new, 35% second fill and 36% third fill French oak barrels lasted for 17 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:

Alcohol	: 14.5%	Bottling date	: 24 October 2019
Residual Sugar	: 2.8g/l	Release Date	: June 2021
pH	: 3.58	Production	: 10123 (1687 x 6)
Total acidity	: 6.2g/l	Cellaring	: 10+ years
Total Extract	: 35.3g/l	Origin	: Paarl
TSO2	: 89mg/l	IPW	: Yes
		WIETA	: Yes