

MOUNT BULLET

Merlot

2016

Technical Notes

The grapes are picked from a small 3 hectare vineyard. The vineyard is divided up into 5 different parcels each with its own respective clone. The soil, trellising and canopy management is constant through out the vineyard so it is the actual clonal characteristics that determine the different dates of harvest. Over the years we have learnt that there is as much as 11 - 14 days difference between picking the first clone to picking the last clone. The bunches are chilled to 3°C before being sorted on a conveyor and destemmed. Berries are then hand sorted, before cold maceration ensues for 3 to 6 days at 8°C. We try to naturally ferment 100% of the different parcels of grapes making up the Mount Bullet. Fermentation temperatures vary between 26 - 30°C. After pressing, the wine is raked and left to complete its malolactic fermentation and maturation in oak barriques.



Styling

Considerable emphasis is placed on maximising the different clone expressions and therefore each parcel is vinified and matured separately before final blending. The wine has a fragrance of ripe red fruits such as plums and dark cherries, with earthy complexity and yet still expressing minerality. Maintaining a good acidity lends to outstanding freshness with a well integrated ripe and seductive tannin structure. Incorporating a minimal winemaking intervention approach, such as natural ferment and only two "punch downs" daily, retains silkiness and elegance.

Maturation

100% matured in barriques (225L) for approximately 20 months using a blend of 3 Bordeaux cooperages. The oak used is of a tighter grain and medium toasted. New oak - 25%, 2nd fill - 50% and 3rd fill - 25%.

Wine Analyses

Variety:	100% Merlot
Alcohol:	14,5%
Acidity:	6.1 g/l
pH:	3.31
Residual sugar:	2.2 g/l

Clones planted:	MO 03, 12, 192 and MO 343 and 348
Rootstock:	Richter 110
Soil types:	Mostly Table Mountain Sandstone with a high percentage of quartz silica crystal and a deeper kaolin clay base.
Aspect of vineyards:	East facing slopes.
Ha planted:	3 ha
Planting distance:	2.2m x 1.2m
Vines per hectare:	3787 vines
Trellis system:	Vertical shoot positioning.
Irrigation:	Micro irrigation.
Average Production:	5 tons per hectare.
Harvest dates:	On average last week of March and first week of April.

Clone Selection:

MO 343:	23%
MO 348:	23%
MO 192:	18%
MO 12:	18%
MO 03:	18%