



DE TRAFFORD MERLOT 1999

VINEYARD BLOCKS

1 block 11 year old vines on 4 wire vertical trellis. Clone MO 192 on 101 - 14 rootstock. On low lying Helderberg mountain site. Poor gravelly clay soil. Yield **8 tons / hect.**

2nd block 5 year old vines on 5 wire vertical trellis. Mix of "new clones" on R110 & R99 rootstocks. 'Mont Fleur' vineyard - high altitude Helderberg mountain slope. Soil deep red Hutton. Yield **5 tons / hect.** Both vineyards lightly irrigated after veraison to avoid excessive stress during the critical ripening stage.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

A dry, hot summer. The ripening period was hot and dry, but thankfully not too many excessively hot days. The harvest was early with ripe, healthy grapes producing big wines with high alcohols. Harvest date : 19 -25 / 2 / 99 @ 24.1 – 25.3° balling..

PRODUCTION

Handpicking into 20 kg lugboxes. Destemming and gentle crushing directly into small 2 ton open top fermentation tanks. Spontaneous natural yeast fermentation @ max. 33 deg. with the cap of skins punched down manually 2 - 4 times a day for 10 days. Wine drained directly to barrels together with single pressing from traditional basket press.

All our red wine undergo malolactic fermentation in the barrel. This helps to integrate the new oak component and fix colour and flavour compounds. 35% new French oak and 5% new American oak was used from the high quality 'Taransaud' and 'Demptos' cooperages. Time in barrel 17 months, which included several rackings to gradually clarify the wine and assist maturation.

This wine was lightly fined with fresh egg whites before bottling unfiltered by hand on the property. Bottling date : 22 / 8 / 00. Production : 504 cases.

TASTING NOTES

Dark red colour. Intense dark cherry and plum nose with a little chocolate, nuts and spices. A big, intensely flavoured merlot with a rich, mouthfilling palate. Probably best between 2001 & 2008. Ideal with strong flavoured grilled red meat.

ANALYSIS

Alc. 14.78 SG. 2.5 TA 5.2 pH 3.63 VA 0.59 SO2 37 & 95