



DE TRAFFORD MERLOT 2005

VINEYARD BLOCKS

1 block 17 year old vines on 7 wire vertical trellis with moveable foliage wires. Clone MO 192 on 101 - 14 rootstock. On low lying Helderberg mountain site. Poor gravelly clay soil.

Yield 5 tons / hect. (36hl/ha).

2nd block 11 year old vines on 7 wire vertical trellis with moveable foliage wires. Mix of "new clones" on R110 & R99 rootstocks. 'Mont Fleur' vineyard - high altitude mountain slope. Soil deep red Hutton. Yield 6 tons / hect. (39hl/ha).

3rd block 15 year old vines on 5 wire vertical trellis with moveable foliage wires. Clone MO192 on R99 rootstock. "Keermont" vineyard – high altitude mountain slope. Soil deep gravelly Hutton.

Yield 4 tons / hect. (29hl/ha)

5% Cabernet Franc included.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

Slightly below average winter rain was followed by above average spring rain. This allowed for good growth up to flowering and was followed by hot and dry conditions during berry enlargement, ensuring smaller berries. Substantial rain (75mm) in January delayed the harvest a little, producing a soft, well balanced Merlot without quite the concentration of the later varieties.

Harvest date : 9 / 2 / 05 – 4 / 3 / 05 @ 24 – 25.4° B

PRODUCTION

Handpicking into 20 kg lugboxes. Destemming and gentle crushing directly into small 2 ton open top fermentation tanks. Spontaneous natural yeast fermentation @ max. 31°C with the cap of skins punched down manually 1-3 times a day for 10 – 13 days. Wine drained directly to barrels together with single pressing from traditional basket press.

All our red wines undergo malolactic fermentation in the barrel. 35% new French oak was used from high quality coopers. Time in barrel 20 months, which included several rackings to gradually clarify the wine and assist maturation.

The wine was bottled unfiltered by hand on the property.

Bottling date : 14 / 12 / 06. Production : 1200 cases.

TASTING NOTES

Attractive deep red colour. Rich red berry and cherry fruit with beguiling savoury earthiness, nuts and spices. These flavours follow through on the palate with plenty of fine tannins and a classic long, dry finish.

Probably best between 2008 and 2015. Ideal with rich pasta and various meat dishes.

ANALYSIS

Alc. 14.83 SG. 2.1 TA 5.7 pH 3.52 VA 0.53 SO₂ 32_{free} 85_{total}