



## **DE TRAFFORD MERLOT 2002**

### **VINEYARD BLOCKS**

1 block 14 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 **2 tons / hect.**

2nd block 8 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.**

5% Cabernet Franc and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon included.

### **VINTAGE CONDITIONS**

The growing season was initially very difficult with downy mildew problems causing some crop loss. 150 mm rain fell mid-January which delayed harvest a little and allowed the grapes to ripen comfortably in the warm to hot late summer.

Harvest date : 21 / 2 / 02 – 15 / 3 / 02 @ 23.1 – 25.2° 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. 31 deg. with the cap of skins punched down manually 3- 4 times a day for 10 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 and 5% new American oak was used from high quality coopers. Time in barrel 18 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 : 13/9/03. Production : 500 cases.

### **TASTING NOTES**

Dark red colour. Dark cherry and plum nose with an interesting creamy, nutty character. A big, intensely flavoured merlot with a rich, mouthfilling palate and a creamy finish. Probably best between 2004 & 2011. Ideal with strong flavoured grilled red meat.

### **ANALYSIS**

Alc. 14.9 SG. 1.6 TA 5.4 pH 3.56 VA 0.53 SO<sub>2</sub> 32 & 73