



DE TRAFFORD MERLOT 2012

VINEYARD BLOCKS

- 1st block 24 year old vines on vertical trellis. 1 ha parcel we've used since 1992 at 'Post House'. Clone MO 192 on 101 - 14 rootstock. On low lying Helderberg mountain site. Poor gravelly clay soil.
Yield 3 tons / hect. (22hl/ha).
- 2nd block 18 year old vines on vertical trellis. Mix of clones on R110 & R99 rootstocks. 'Mont Fleur' vineyard - high altitude mountain slope. Soil deep red Hutton, decomposed granite.
Yield 4 tons / hect. (29hl/ha).
- 3rd block 9 year old vines on vertical trellis. Clone MO 343 on 101-14 rootstock. New addition to 'Mont Fleur' vineyard – similar soil.
Yield 5 tons / hect. (33hl/ha)
- 4th block 6 year old vines on 5 wire vertical trellis. Clone MO348 on 101-14 rootstock. "Keermont" vineyard – high altitude mountain slope. Soil similar to Mont Fleur, heavier clay component.
Yield 5 ton / hect. (33hl/ha)

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

Winter 2011 was colder than usual, but with average rainfall resulting in excellent, even bud-break. We had good growth in spring, but poor weather (cold and rain) over the flowering period resulting in uneven flowering and berry set. We paid extra attention to green harvesting to help make up for this. Disease pressure was managed with well-timed sprays and open, small canopies. January was exceptionally hot, which really jolted the vines into ripeness. The ripening period of February and March was much cooler and close to perfect, with not much rain, and we're extremely satisfied with the 2012 vintage.

Harvest date: 25/02/2012-21/03/2012 @ 22.2-25.0°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. 30°C with the cap of skins punched down manually 1-3 times a day for 10 days. Wine drained directly to barrels together with single pressing from traditional basket press.

Malolactic fermentation in the barrel. 35% new French oak. 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.

Production: 626 x 12 x 750ml

TASTING NOTES

Attractive bright red colour. Pure dark red berry and cherry fruit with intriguing nuts & spices and a little herbaceous, fynbos character. These flavours follow through on the palate with lovely fine, dry tannins and a soft, long finish.

Probably best between 2018 and 2026.

Ideal with lamb and other moderately rich red meat dishes, as well as rich baked pasta.

ANALYSIS

Alc. 14.45 SG. 1.9g/l TA 5.3g/l pH 3.53 VA 0.61 SO₂ 13_{free} 52_{total}