



DE TRAFFORD MERLOT 2011

VINEYARD BLOCKS

1st block 23 year old vines on vertical trellis. 1 ha parcel we've used since 1992. 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 17 year old vines on vertical trellis. Mix of "new clones" on R110 & R99 rootstocks. 'Mont Fleur' vineyard - high altitude mountain slope. Soil deep red Hutton, decomposed granite.

Yield 3 tons / hect. (22hl/ha).

3rd block 8 year old vines on vertical trellis. Clone MO 343 on 101-14 rootstock. New addition to 'Mont Fleur' vineyard – similar soil.

Yield 6 tons / hect. (39hl/ha)

4th block 5 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 1 ton / hect. (8hl/ha)

15% Cabernet Franc from home, Mont Fleur, vineyard.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

We had a late 2010 winter with a little below average rainfall, but cold enough in May to ensure even bud-break in spring. The growing season was cool with some regular rainfall, which made up for the drier winter. Flowering was good and although December was very windy (most in 42 years), we had no damage and a normal healthy crop of very good quality. The harvest period was very hot and dry, but we managed to get all the grapes to the cellar in the cool mornings at optimum ripeness.

Harvest date: 9/2/11 to 4/3/11 @ 24.3 - 25°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.

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: 19/12/2012. Production: 562 x 12 x 750ml

TASTING NOTES

Attractive deep blood red colour. Intense, rich red berry and dark cherry fruit nose with beguiling Indian spices, savoury earthiness, nuts and a hint of chilli chocolate. These flavours follow through on the palate in a generous full rich style with plenty of fine tannins and a classic long, dry finish.

Probably best between 2016 and 2024.

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

ANALYSIS

Alc. 14.88 SG. 2.9g/l TA 5.6g/l pH 3.68 VA 0.77 SO₂ 4_{free} 36_{total}