

RUSTENBERG WINES

STELLENBOSCH MERLOT 2018

INTRODUCTION

Merlot has been a mainstay red grape variety on Rustenberg since the late 1970's where its lead role has been to complement Cabernet Sauvignon in blends. Rustenberg's Merlots tend to be bigger and bolder in body and are structured to have excellent aging potential, pairing well with red meat based dishes and rewarding decanting before being served.

VINTAGE

This vintage was impacted by the fourth year of the ongoing drought in the region. The 2017 Winter was cold and dry, followed by a dry Spring and Summer, with bouts of unusual weather. A number of thunder storms resulted in a late onset of additional vigour in the vineyards. Unsettled weather and wind during flowering, along with a freak hail storm and low levels of soil moisture decreased yields by 20% to 50%. The harvest began closer to its average start date and the smaller berries and bunches yielded lower juice volumes per ton. The lower yields resulted in the wines showing excellent concentration and body, producing rich, robust reds and fruit forward, expressive whites and rosé.

VINEYARDS

Wine of Origin	Stellenbosch
Varietal Blended	100% Merlot
Soil Types	Decomposed Granite, Hutton and Tukulu
Trellising/Pruning System	VSP (Vertical Shoot Positioned), 2 Node Spur Pruned
Irrigation Type	Minimal Drip Irrigation
Picking Method & Date	Hand Picked, March 2017

WINEMAKING

Extraction Method	Crushed and De-stemmed Fruit, Pumped Over During Ferment
Fermentation Vessel	Stainless Steel
Yeast	Cultured Active Dry Wine Yeast
Extended Maceration	7 days
Oak Aging	11 Months
Age and Type of Oak	20% new and 80% 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th fill French 225L barrels
Fining Agents Used	Egg Whites (Albumen)
Final Analysis	Alc v/v: 14% TA 6.0g/L pH 3.47 RS 3.2g/L
Bottling Date	December 2018

WINE

Tasting Note	Rich aromas of blackberries, cassis, eucalyptus and dark chocolate follow through to a smooth palate that is both balanced and well-rounded with fine grained tannins. This wine can be enjoyed now or will benefit from maturation in ideal cellar conditions.
Aging Potential	8 – 10+ years from vintage under ideal cellaring conditions.

ACCOLADES

AWARD	COMPETITION/PUBLICATION	YEAR/EDITION
Silver Medal	International Wine and Spirits Competition	2019

