



OAK VALLEY

Oak Valley Merlot Cabernet Blend 2007

Technical Notes

Grapes are harvested from three different vineyard sites, the valley floor, a north facing slope and south facing mountain vineyard. Yields in the mountain are ultra low; Merlot averages slightly above 4 tonnes p/ha while the lower lying Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon yield above 6 tonnes p/ha. Canopy is opened in the bunch zone a week before harvest to avoid green flavours. In the cellar, berries are individually hand sorted before cold maceration ensues for 5 days at 8°C. Cultivated yeast is added and fermentation occurs between 26-30°C. Three pumpovers and several punchdowns per day ensures gentle extraction of flavours from the skins. After fermentation, the wine undergoes another period of skin contact before pressing. Malolactic fermentation occurs in tank then the wine is matured for 18 months in 70% new French oak and the remainder 2nd fill.

Styling

The 2007 differs noticeably in style with previous vintages. The main difference was the type of barrel used. Barrels had a much tighter grain with staves that were aged for longer outdoors over 36 as opposed to 24 months. Longer aged staves resulted in finer softer tannins. The blend comprises 56% Merlot, 27% Cabernet Franc and 17% Cabernet Sauvignon. Complex, spicy aromas, perfume and cigar box. Full bodied with beautiful ripe red fruit flavours of mulberries, dark cherries balanced by excellent freshness due to natural acidity, soft and elegant tannins. Made in a classical Bordeaux style this is a serious wine that is built to last. Cellaring potential of 10+ years.

Wine Analysis

Alcohol	14%
Total acidity	5.4 g/l
pH	3.57
Volatile acid	0.50 g/l
Residual sugar	2.8 g/l

Vineyard

Aspect	South-west and north facing slopes
Elevation	350-580m
Soil type	Medium texture gravelly soils with structured clay layer
Cultivar	Merlot (56%), Cabernet Franc (27%), Cabernet Sauvignon (17%)
Rootstock	R99, R110, Ruggeri 140
Planting date	2000-2005
Ha planted	11.76 ha
Average tonnage	4-6 tonnes p/ha
Irrigation	Drip irrigation, post-harvest irrigation mostly
Trellising	Extended Perold
Vines per ha	2564-3333 vines/ha
Harvest dates	25 March - 1 April 2007

