

RUSTENBERG WINES

STELLENBOSCH MERLOT 2017

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

The Winter of 2016 was dry but cold as drought conditions persisted in the Western Cape. Despite the drought, a warm, dry spring and little wind meant that there was little disease pressure and little stress on the vineyards beyond the heat. Harvest started slightly earlier than usual but was 10 days later than the record early start of the 2016 vintage. Careful use of irrigation to offset the dry drought conditions and cold nights experienced during the first four months of the year resulted in superb quality, and wonderful acidity, colour and flavour concentration in the wines. Indications are that 2017 will be an excellent vintage with plenty of potential to age well.

VINEYARDS

Wine of Origin	Simonsberg, 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	15 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 5.9g/L pH 3.52 RS 2.5g/L
Bottling Date	July 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	Veritas Awards	2018

