

RUSTENBERG WINES

STELLENBOSCH MERLOT 2019

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 2019 vintage was a challenging one for the Rustenberg team. While the winter of 2018 was a welcome break from the previous four winters of drought, most vineyards had not fully recovered and produced below average yields. A warm snap in June and a wet Spring, coupled with a wetter than average Summer harvesting season made 2019 a challenge, with some late harvest thinning or multiple harvests of the same vineyard required to achieve uniformity. Early and mid-season ripening varieties performed well, all achieving flavour ripeness at lower alcohol levels, while late ripening varieties required patience and extended time on the vines, again achieving lower alcohols overall, but creating ripe, structured wines.

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 2019

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 5.6g/L pH 3.49 RS 3.0g/L
Bottling Date	June 2020

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
4 Stars	Platter's Wine Guide	2022
Double Gold	Michelangelo International Wine & Spirits Awards	2020

