



Stellenbosch Merlot 2021

RUSTENBERG WINES

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 2021 vintage was produced with the challenges of COVID-19 ever present. The winter of 2020 started late after a warm autumn and was cold with plenty of rain. The cool and wet conditions extended well into spring, through summer and much of the harvest season. The result of these conditions was slow, steady, stress free vineyard growth and fruit development. White grape yields were lower than average due to the impact of the weather during critical stages in fruit development. The white wines from the vintage ripened two weeks later than in 2020 and achieved full ripeness at lower sugar levels; producing wines with lower alcohols, excellent acidity and brilliant flavour development. Yields were higher than average in the reds and the slow ripening season saw excellent flavour and tannin development. These well-structured wines with moderate alcohols and good acidity should show plenty of potential to age.

Vineyard

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 2021

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 5.1g/L pH 3.54 RS 2.1g/L
Bottling Date	July 2022

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.
Aging Potential	8 – 10+ years from vintage under ideal cellaring conditions.

Accolades

Award:	Competition/Publication:	Year/Edition:
	New Release – Not Yet Rated / Judged	

