

## TASTING AND TECHNICAL NOTES

### CAPE MENTELLE ZINFANDEL 2002

A NEAR PERFECT VINTAGE MARRED ONLY BY A SLIGHT DROP IN YIELD ★★★★★

TASTING NOTES	Distinctively Zin - showing walnuts and woodspice over ripe raisiny fruit and hints of liquorice and clover. Huge in every way, a challenge to swallow - big flavours, big structure, big potential. A wine for macho winos. Our biggest Zin to date!
VINEYARD	Grapes are sourced from the estate's Wallcliffe vineyard, planted in 1975, and a contract vineyard, McHenry's, which was planted in 1997. All the vines were propagated from original material sourced from California in 1963. The unirrigated estate vineyard grows on gravel laterite soils derived from decomposed ironstone over clay sub-soils. Vine spacing is 2200vines/hectare and the vines are spur pruned on a low cordon. The McHenry Vineyard is planted on top of the ridge between Margaret River and the coast on beautifully deep ironstone gravel soils and is trained similarly to the estate vines. However the younger vines require more canopy management and crop thinning to achieve a similar balance to the older vines.
THE SEASON	Budburst got off to an early start after a relatively warm and dry winter. However September and October were quite wet, windy and cold which slowed down shoot growth and had a detrimental effect on flowering. Warmer weather in November saw the vines regain vigour and by December, supplementary irrigation was applied to keep the vines from stress. Another fine vintage seemed assured, assisted by judicious shoot removal and canopy management during December to February. Harvest commenced a week or so later than usual. Grape flavours were highly aromatic this year with higher than normal acid levels. This was due to an unusually mild December to March period and lower than average yields.
HARVEST	A moderately late harvest, starting with the McHenry on the 12th March followed by two harvests of the Estate, with a small amount picked on the 13th and the majority picked on 24th March. Mc Henry vineyard cropped a t a moderate 7.5 tonne / hectare with a sugar of 26.8 brix and 9.8 g/L acid, a bigger yield of 12 tonne/hectare was seen in the Estate vineyard which slowed down the ripening rate but resulted in good acid, sugar balance of 26.4 brix and 7.9 g/L acid.
VINIFICATION	Due to the nature of the trellising employed with Zinfandel, all the grapes are hand-picked. After crushing and de-stemming, the must is soaked for several days prior to fermentation to soften up the raisins. The must is then inoculated with a vigorous yeast strain, pumped over gently once a day and after seven days, is pressed off. The wine ferments to dryness and completes a spontaneous malolactic fermentation in large old wooden vats. In the second year, the wine is racked to a high proportion of new American oak barrels for a further 10 months ageing before a coarse filtration. Bottling took place in December 2003. Analysis: 16.5% alcohol, 6.9g/l acidity, pH 3.61