

CABERNET MERLOT 'TRINDERS' 2003

THE TRINDERS BLEND TAKES INSPIRATION FROM THE CLASSIC WINES OF BORDEAUX. CAPE MENTELLE HAS DEVELOPED AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR LONG LIVED CABERNET AND THIS BLEND SEEKS TO CAPTURE ALL THE QUALITIES OF THIS VARIETY AND CREATE A WELL ROUNDED, EARLIER DRINKING STYLE WITH THE ADDITION OF MERLOT AND A LITTLE CABERNET FRANC.

APPEARANCE

Deep, rich violet.

NOSE

Delicious blackcurrant and dark cherry aromas waft over an undercurrent of cinnamon and cloves.

PALATE

An initial sensation of sweet fruit and cassis leads into a rich palate showing hints of licorice and dark chocolate along with more savoury black bean and cedar characters. The tannins are dusty and focused providing great structure and length.

VINTAGE AND VINEYARD

A mild winter led to an early budburst. Spring was cool, wet and windy which slowed shoot growth. By December the weather had warmed up and we enjoyed some mild to very warm days until early March when it became very hot. Rain fell mid-March giving the vines some relief and cool and cloudy conditions lingered giving just one week of perfect weather in April to harvest the later reds before another larger front passed over. Cabernet sauvignon and merlot are sourced from the Estate's Trinders Vineyard and three long-term growers within the Margaret River region. Small amounts of cabernet and merlot have also been introduced from our Foxcliffe vineyard and Chapman Brook vineyard, located to the south. The soils in the majority of these vineyards are comprised of laterite gravel loam over sandy clay sub-soil.

WINEMAKING TECHNIQUE

Merlot was picked between 6 March and 9 April mostly around the 25.0 brix point. Cabernet sauvignon ripened over an extended period with the first batch harvested from the Ironstone vineyard, on the 9th March, the remainder between 28th March and 10th April. Light crushing is followed by fermentation, regular pumping over for colour, flavour and tannin extraction occurs. Once dry, the wine undergoes malolactic fermentation in stainless steel tanks, after which the wine is racked to 50:50 French and American oak barrels (35% new) for 15 months. The final blend is 56% cabernet sauvignon and 32% merlot with cabernet franc, malbec and petit verdot making up the remainder.

CLOSURE

Domestic-screwcap
Export-cork/screwcap

CABERNET MERLOT 'TRINDERS' 2003 - Technical Notes

TASTING NOTE

Delicious blackcurrant and cherry aromas waft over an undercurrent of cinnamon and cloves. On the palate an initial sensation of sweet fruit and cassis leads into a rich palate showing hints of licorice and dark chocolate along with more savoury black bean and cedar characters. The tannins are dusty and focused providing great structure and length.

VINEYARD

Cabernet sauvignon and merlot are sourced from the Estate's Trinders Vineyard and three long-term growers within the Margaret River region. The soils in the majority of these vineyards are comprised of laterite gravel loam over sandy clay sub-soil. The Estate vines are planted at 2200 vines/hectare and trained on 1.5m vertical trellises for cane pruning. In the other vineyards, the vines are close-spaced at 5000 vines/ha and trained on 1.8m vertical trellises. Small amounts of cabernet and merlot have also been introduced from our Foxcliffe vineyard and Chapman Brook vineyard, located to the south.

THE SEASON

A rather mild winter led to an early budburst, however spring was cool, wet and windy which slowed down shoot growth. By the end of spring the weather had warmed up and the rainfall that fell from September to early November was but a distant memory. Irrigation commenced in late December with the sting of early summer and we enjoyed some mild to very warm days until early March when it became very hot indeed. Vintage was in full swing by this stage, the early harvest caused by the lower than average yields and unseasonally hot conditions. The low yields were a direct result of a cold spring the previous vintage which affected bud fruitfulness. Rain fell mid-March giving the vines some relief but the cool and cloudy conditions lingered giving just a week of perfect weather in April to harvest the rest of the reds before another larger front passed over.

HARVEST

The 'Trinders' blend is comprised of 38 parcels of fruit from eleven different vineyards. Merlot picked between 6 March and 9 April mostly around the 25.0 brix point. Cabernet sauvignon ripened over an extended period with the first batch of cabernet sauvignon harvested from Ironstone vineyard, on the 9 March, the Maiolo, Trinders, Foxcliffe, Chapman and Warner Glen vineyards between 28 March and 10 April. Merlot and cabernet attained sugar levels between 24.5 and 26.5 brix and moderate acidity. A challenging vintage where hot weather and rain influenced harvest decisions however the window of opportunity to produce good wines was still eminently attainable.

VINIFICATION

Light crushing is followed by a warm (28 - 30°C) fermentation before cooling down to 25°C for the completion of fermentation. Regular pumping over for colour, flavour and tannin extraction occurs during the vigorous phase of ferment, tapering off towards the end. The degree of tannin extraction is determined by taste to achieve a balanced level of tannin mouthfeel. Batches are treated individually with skin contact ranging from 4 to 28 days. Each batch is given a light pressing; the harder pressings are separated. Once dry, the wine is inoculated for malolactic fermentation which occurs in stainless steel tanks, after which the wine is racked to 50:50 French and American oak barrels (35% new) for 15 months. The final blend is 56% cabernet sauvignon and 32% merlot, 4% cabernet franc, 3% malbec, 3% petit verdot and 2% shiraz. The wine was blended, filtered and bottled in November 2003.

Analysis: 14.5% alcohol; 6.7g/l acidity; pH 3.49

Closure: Cork/Screwcap