

## TASTING AND TECHNICAL NOTES

### CAPE MENTELLE CABERNET MERLOT 'TRINDERS' 2002

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

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| TASTING NOTES | Sweet liquorice and blackcurrants, hints of vanilla and blueberry, are a classic definition of the 'Trinders' style. The wine is slippery smooth and immensely pluggable with just the faintest suggestion of tannin. The delicious array of flavours linger on the palate.  |
| VINEYARD      | Cabernet sauvignon and merlot are predominantly sourced from the estate's 'Trinders Vineyard' and three long-term growers within the Margaret River region. The soils are comprised of laterite gravel loam over sandy clay sub-soil. The estate vines are planted at 2200 vines/ha and vertically trained on 1.5m 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 southern vineyards Foxcliffe and Chapman Brook.   |
| 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       | The Trinders blend is comprised of 26 parcels of fruit from eleven different vineyards. Merlot was harvested quite late between 29th March and 13th April mostly around the 25.0 brix point. Cabernet ripened over an extended period from the 20th March to 20th April. Merlot and cabernet attained sugar levels between 24.5 and 26.5 brix. Where vine growth was balanced, the seasonal conditions allowed fruit flavours to be very fine, while the juice acidity varied from moderate to very good. Another cracker vintage permitted fleshy, generously proportioned but eminently harmonious wines to be produced.   |
| 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 of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot was bottled in October 2003.<br>Analysis: 14.5% alcohol; 6.7 g/l acidity; pH 3.49. |

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