



Wild Ferment
Merlot
2018



IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

The vineyards producing the Peacock Wild Ferment Merlot are grown on the slopes of the Helderberg. They are planted at a height of 100 to 290 meters above sea level, which ensure a more moderate temperature in the vineyards. To the south, they overlook the full expanse of False Bay and the Southern Atlantic shoreline – a mere 6 kilometres away on average. The soils are of sandstone origin with medium sized stones, helping with both drainage and good moisture retention. The vines are 12–17 years old. Strong south–easterly winds during the growing season help to control growth and crop size thus improving the quality of the grapes.

A GENTLE HAND

The Merlot vineyards were harvested according to taste in mid–February, with the grapes showing fresh fruit flavours and an uplifting acidity. Bunches were de–stemmed and fermented in our wooden fermenters. During the course of fermentation, gentle punch–downs were performed twice a day. The wine spent 30 days on the skins after fermentation to help integrate the tannins and stabilize colour. Our wines are carefully fed via gravity into the tanks and we make use of a basket press to gently extract the last bit of aromatics from the berries. All the components are then combined and undergo natural malolactic fermentation in the barrels.

The Peacock Wild Ferment Merlot was aged primarily in 3rd and 4th fill French barrels for 9 months, to soften the tannins, whilst still preserving the fresh fruit aromatics. We don't fine our wines and only use a gentle filtration.

AND A FEW PRAYERS TO MOTHER NATURE: THE 2017/2018 GROWING SEASON

The Cape experienced a very dry growing season from the end of the 2017 harvest and also during the beginning of 2018. The 2017 winter was not exceptionally cold but still colder than the previous three years, which helped to ensure an even budburst. The rainfall was the lowest that we have experienced in the last 10 years on the farm.

Budburst started earlier than usual seeing that the winter was not very cold. We could see some of the first buds appear early in September. From there on the vines were struggling to grow due to the dry condition and veraison only took place in early January. The best practice during dry conditions is to always have a completely weed-free vineyard to prevent excessive water usage and to limit stress on the vine by suckering if needed- sometimes this also happens naturally.

In early January we did receive rain and also a bit in early February. We believe that this was the saving grace for our vines to help them ripen the fruit more evenly. During this time, we did not see excessive heat spikes and had lovely cool evenings which helped give the vines a longer growing season, thus allowing more complex flavours to develop in the grapes.

Harvest started about 10 days later than in 2017. We saw a decrease in berry size on some blocks. Fortunately, little to no rot was found on the grapes, which helped to have a stress-free sorting table. Overall, we are more than happy with the quality of the 2018 harvest.

TASTING NOTES FROM THE GLASS OF NADIA BARNARD

Cassis, plums and perfume, with subtle notes of pencil shavings and green herbs on the nose. A refreshing acidity on the palate makes this wine intriguing. It is perfect on its own or with a meal as it has integrated tannins and a lingering length. There are a variety of dishes that this wine could be paired with but I would recommend serving it slightly chilled with a charcuterie platter.

THE NUMBERS

Alc 14.5

RS 2.4

TA 5

pH 3.5