



# Pegasus Bay Reserve MAESTRO Merlot Malbec 2009

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## THE SEASON

An exceptionally early budburst was brought about by a very mild spring. Warm summer days followed by a lingering dry autumn with cool nights produced healthy, perfectly ripened grapes with vibrant fruit flavours. All of the reds showed excellent physiologically mature tannins.

## THE VINEYARD AND THE VINES

The vines are grown in stony, freely draining soil on north facing terraces. Being the most sheltered and warmest part of our vineyard they receive extra heat and we removed the leaves from around the bunches early in the summer to accentuate this effect. Some of the blocks are over a quarter of a century old and are on their own roots.

## HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

We used the traditional methods which are employed to make Bordeaux's celebrated wine, Claret. After picking during May the grapes were fermented by their indigenous yeasts in stainless steel tanks. During this process the juice was regularly drained from the tanks sprayed back over the surface of the cap of floating grape skins to keep it moist and healthy. After this primary fermentation ceased the tanks were sealed in the grape remnants were allowed to steep or macerate in the newly formed wine several weeks to help improve the wine's body and structure. The exact period of this process was judged by daily tasting. The wine was then drained off and put on to French oak barriques. In the summer after harvest it underwent natural spontaneous malolactic or secondary fermentation. It was in these barriques for two years, during which time it underwent several rackings, enabling it to clarify naturally. The various batches were then blended according to taste before bottling. This wine is a blend of 45% Merlot and 45% malbec and 5% each of cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc.

## THE WINE

On release the wine is a dense, inky ruby. It is bursting with impressions of blackberry, purple plum, vanilla pod, cigar box, liquorice, black olive and tar. The palate, which is mouth filling and rich, is backed by a spine of muscular, fine-grained, ripe tannins that draw out the wine's length and will help it age gracefully. While ready to drink on release it should develop a range of additional nuances as it mellows with age. It can be expected to improve in the next eight – 12 years and lived well beyond.

Wine in moderation is a natural health food.

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