

# FLEUR DU CAP

## ESSENCE DU CAP MERLOT 2020

At Fleur du Cap, we are not constrained by farm, vineyard or climate when crafting wines – allowing our winemakers the freedom to choose the finest grapes from the best vineyards in the Cape and to produce highly awarded, richly layered wines of great complexity and finesse.

### THE VINEYARDS

The grapes were sourced from vineyards in the Stellenbosch and Somerset West areas. The vineyards were planted in 1992, 1999 and 2000, at altitudes ranging from 150 to 250m above sea level and produced yields of 8 to 10 tons/ha. Supplementary irrigation was given towards the end of the growing season. The vines were trellised according to the 5-wire hedge system, with leaf breaking done in the bunch zones early on to expose bunches to direct sunlight. During veraison, a green harvest was done to ensure even ripening. Pest and disease control were implemented according to South African subjective IPW standards.

### THE WINEMAKING

The grapes were picked by hand at 23° to 24° Balling in mid-February. In the cellar the grapes were carefully destemmed, crushed and inoculated with a selected yeast. To preserve fruit flavours, the fermentation temperature was controlled at 25°C. Colour and tannin extraction was performed by pump-overs and evaluated daily to prevent the incorporation of harsh tannins. After fermentation the wine was drained off and the skins pressed with the hard pressings excluded. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally. The wine matured for 12 months with a combination of French and American oak and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> fill barrels.

### WINEMAKER COMMENTS

The wine is ruby red in colour with aromas of cherries, plums and black olives on the nose, underlined by elegant oak spices. On the palate this full-bodied wine is well-balanced and velvety soft with abundant layers of fruit and a touch of underlying oak that lingers on the finish.

### FOOD PAIRING

This wine is the perfect partner to spicy Mediterranean food, fish or duck.

ANALYSIS	
Alcohol	14.0 vol %
Residual Sugar	1.93 g/l
Total Acidity	6.32 g/l
pH	3.52

