



# CABERNET MERLOT

## Background:

Our first Cabernet Merlot was produced in 1982. We have always felt that the merlot grape enhanced cabernet and in this case merlot at 29%, is more than a bit player. Indeed tasters sometimes suggest that the Merlot is dominant. Merlot extends the flavour, enhances the finish and performs in a very positive fashion.

The winemaking process begins in the vineyard. Maturity must be reached regardless of birds, rain or hungry kangaroos. Cabernet sauvignon is almost the last grapes to be picked and the pressure is considerable. We hand pick. The crusher is set up to destalk without crushing, the berries then pumped, largely intact, to an overhead fermenter to remain on skins for a long slow and warm ferment. The cap is thoroughly and continuously irrigated during and following fermentation to achieve an even temperature distribution and the necessary warmth for complete extraction. These grapes have an abundance of the components that make a red wine so highly coloured and flavoured. There is the fruit flavour to balance the structural components. This is no wine wimp.

The malo-lactic fermentation takes place in small wood. Whereas in the past we have made great use of 450 litre puncheons we today go to the extra expense of 225 litre barriques for the extra air that infiltrates the wine and the brighter aromas that develop. The barrels add a component of tannin and vanillin aroma that is substantial yet, given the depth of flavour in the raw material, hardly apparent in the finished wine. After 12 months in barriques, interrupted by quarterly decanting, the wine is lightly filtered and bottled.

## Current Release: 2016 Vintage

### Viticultural & vinification notes

<b>VINTAGE CONDITIONS</b>	A good vintage for Cabernet and Merlot in Southern Margaret River with moderate temperatures throughout ripening.
<b>VINEYARD</b>	Three Hills Karridale Hand pruned to rods Hand picked
<b>GRAPE VARIETIES</b>	Cabernet Sauvignon 71%, Merlot 29%,
<b>MATURATION</b>	Wholly in barriques of fully imported 225 litre French oak for a period of 12 months.
<b>WINE ANALYSIS</b>	Alc/Vol: 14.1% Acidity: 6.5g/l pH: 3.75 Residual Sugar: < 0.1 g/l

<b>COLOUR</b>	Red with a ruby hue.
<b>NOSE</b>	Lifted aroma of red currant, cranberry, blueberry and tomato leaf with some subtle oak and hints of bay leaf, truffle, pimento and eucalypt.
<b>PALATE</b>	It is a medium to full bodied wine with fine tannin and flavours of red fruits, blackberry, green olive and dark chocolate with hints of dried herb, forest floor and rhubarb. The wine demonstrates a savoury persistence and a long chalky tannin structure.



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