

# TAPANAPPA

## A U S T R A L I A

### *TAPANAPPA WHALEBONE VINEYARD 2004 CABERNET SHIRAZ*

#### Vintage Notes

Tapanappa acquired the 30 year old Whalebone Vineyard in 2002 and by harvest 2004 the vineyard had been completely renovated onto new trellis supporting a shoot thinned vertical canopy.

The old Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz and Cabernet Franc vines of the Whalebone Vineyard have responded magnificently. After a thirty-year struggle the vine roots have penetrated the deeper limestone layers and are extracting a balance of moisture and nutrient to sustain a meagre crop of 4 tonnes/hectare. The vines have sufficient canopy and root system to fully ripen the harvest relying only on natural rainfall.

The 2003/04 growing season evolved into a roller-coaster temperature ride. December was warm, January cold, February blistering and March and April cool. In nearby Coonawarra the heat summation for the 2004 season was 1357°C days versus the long-term average of 1375.6°C days, slightly cooler than average.

From our newly installed weather station at the Whalebone Vineyard, the heat summation for the 2004 harvest was 1284°C days. This trend of Whalebone Vineyard being cooler than Coonawarra has remained consistent for the 2005 and 2006 vintages and may be an artefact of the weather station positioning or accuracy.

However my inclination is that the measurements are correct and that Whalebone ripens slightly earlier and easier than Coonawarra despite being cooler because of the much reduced wind factor in the shelter of the Naracoorte East range compared to the exposed plain of Coonawarra.

The still air, cooler, hot day, cold night regime of the Whalebone Vineyard particularly suits Shiraz in its support role for Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Franc also performs well at the Whalebone Vineyard and that is not surprising given the similarity of the soil and geology to that of St Emilion in Bordeaux where it excels.

The prolonged cool ripening of 2004 allowed Cabernet Sauvignon (70%), Shiraz (20%) and Cabernet Franc (10%) to be picked at the same time in the second week of April in perfect condition. The average sugar level of the fruit at harvest was 24 Brix; the pH was 3.55 and the acid 6gpl as tartaric.

#### Winemaking Notes

The hand picked grapes from the Whalebone Vineyard were de-stemmed and partially crushed (60% whole berries) and chilled to 1 tonne fermenters. After a cold soak of 3 days, a native yeast of the vineyards was added and the fermenters were hand plunged twice daily throughout the two week fermentation. The fermenters were sealed for a further week of skin contact with the finished wine and then pressed directly to new French oak barriques to undergo malo-lactic fermentation on full lees.

After malo lactic, the wines were racked every 6 months of their 18 month stay in barriques. The final clear racking allowed the components to be blended and the wine was given a light egg white fining before being bottled without filtration in December 2005.

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The in-bottle analysis of 2004 Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard Cabernet Shiraz is;

Alcohol	14.3%
pH	3.54
Total Acid	5.1 gpl as tartaric
SO <sub>2</sub>	85 ppm
Volatile Acid	0.40 gpl.

### *The Taste of the Wine*

First and foremost the 2004 Tapanappa Cabernet Shiraz is the taste of the Whalebone Vineyard. The terroir delivers complexity involving the aroma and taste of dusty earth and Eucalypt smoke.

A glass of Tapanappa Cabernet Shiraz is translucent and a vibrant cerise colour. The aroma is built in layers with a core of Cabernet Sauvignon mulberry and clove surrounded by the blackberry and liquorice of Shiraz.

A central sweet fruit flavour follows on with dry dusty tannins turning creamy as the persistence of the fruit, earth and smoke creates length. 2004 Tapanappa Cabernet Shiraz is from a cool dry sunny year and is much longer than it is wide.

Spring lamb lightly roasted with thyme and rosemary is the natural dish to amplify the flavours and structure of the wine.

*Winemaker*          Brian Croser.

*1400 cases made*

