

TAPANAPPA

A U S T R A L I A

TAPANAPPA WHALEBONE VINEYARD 2006 CABERNET SHIRAZ

Vintage Notes

Tapanappa acquired the 30 year-old Whalebone Vineyard in 2002 and completely renovated it onto a 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 2005/2006 growing season was normal except for a hotter than average January. After veraison in January, the ripening months were moderate and cooler than average. In 2005/2006 the heat summation for Whalebone Vineyard for the 7-month growing season was 1394°C days against the average of 1377°C days. In nearby Coonawarra the 2006 heat summation was 1431°C days, only pushed above the long-term average of 1376°C days by the hot January.

Whalebone Vineyard has consistently proven to be cooler than Coonawarra in prior and subsequent vintages (see www.tapanappawines.com.au and scroll down from *Vineyards to Whalebone Vineyard, Wrattenbully to Climate*).

The paradox is that despite being cooler Whalebone Vineyard ripens each variety earlier and more completely than Coonawarra, probably because of the protection it receives from the crest of the Naracoorte Ranges to the west and the much reduced wind speeds from the Great Southern Ocean from the southwest.

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

The moderate ripening months of vintage 2006 allowed Cabernet Sauvignon (60%), Shiraz (30%) and Cabernet Franc (10%) to be picked between the 29th of March and the 1st of April in dry, sunny and cool autumn conditions. The 32 year-old vines of the Whalebone Vineyard yielded the meagre crop of 2.5 tonnes/hectare in 2006. The average analysis at harvest was 25.5 Brix, the pH was 3.5 and the acid 6.5gpl as tartaric.

Winemaking Notes

The precious grapes of the Whalebone Vineyard were hand harvested and kept separate as varietal batches. The grapes were de-stemmed, partially roller crushed and the must was chilled to 3°C into 1 tonne fermentation tubs.

A 3-day cold maceration preceded the beginning of fermentation with selected native yeasts followed by twice daily hand plunging to break up the cap of skins. At the peak of fermentation the temperature of the fermenting juice reached 35°C before exhausting all sugar after 14 days. The fermented wine and skins were sealed down for a further week of post fermentation maceration before draining and pressing directly to French oak barriques, 70% new and 30% 1 use.

After malo-lactic fermentation in barrique the wines were racked and sulphured followed by a racking each 6 months until after a total of 4 rackings and 20 months in barrique the wines were clear.

Again in 2006 the Merlot component from the Whalebone Vineyard was left out of the blend and the Cabernet Sauvignon (60%), Shiraz (30%) and Cabernet Franc (10%) were blended and given a light egg white fining before being bottled without filtration in February of 2008.

The in-bottle analysis of Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard 2006 Cabernet Shiraz is:

Alcohol	14.2%
pH	3.38
Total Acid	5.6gpl
SO ₂	85ppm
Volatile Acid	0.39gpl

The Taste of the Wine

The Whalebone Vineyard terroir exerts its strength in the Cabernet Shiraz blend as a combination of smokey Eucalypt, anise and fresh earth aromas and flavours.

The Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard 2006 Cabernet Shiraz has the fruit sweet core of ripe mulberry and blackberry provided by Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz in the slightly warmer than average 2006 vintage. The Cabernet Franc provides a floral aroma note and silky tannin texture and has much greater influence than the 10% component suggests. The 2006 vintage is notable for its definite but fine-grained tannins.

Dishes based on spring lamb lightly roasted with thyme or rare pigeon breast naturally balance and amplify the structure and flavour of Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard 2006 Cabernet Shiraz.

Winemaker

Brian Croser

Bottled on the 11th of February 2008. Only 1400 cases produced. RRP \$75/bottle.