

TAPANAPPA

WHALEBONE VINEYARD 2007 MERLOT CABERNET FRANC

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

2007 vintage at Joanna, Wrattenbully, was notable for two reasons,

- A frost decimated the vineyard in October and the harvest was exceptionally small; and
- Warm conditions in January and February combined with the small crop, accelerated veraison and harvest.

2007 was the warmest vintage at Tapanappa's Joanna, Wrattenbully site since the vineyard was purchased at the end of 2002. 2010 has since proven to be warmer.

The heat accumulated from October 2006 to April 2007, the growing season, was 1534° C Days versus the eight-year average of 1413° C Days.

There were no heat waves during the 2007 growing-season and all months including the critical ripening months of March and April were on average temperatures except January (+ 31° C Days) and February (+ 64° C Days).

The Merlot and Cabernet Franc are on the higher parts of Whalebone Vineyard and partially escaped the frost. The Merlot was harvested in the second week of March and the Cabernet Franc in the third week of March almost three weeks earlier than normal.

At the Whalebone Vineyard there are just 1.2 hectares of Merlot and 0.6 hectares of Cabernet Franc both planted in 1974.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The Whalebone Merlot and Cabernet Franc were completely ripe at harvest with sugars at 25 Brix and natural acids at 5gpl. The pH of the juices was moderate at 3.6.

The very ripe fruit was hand harvested and transported to the Petaluma winery in the Piccadilly Valley where it was de-stemmed, crushed and chilled to 1 tonne open fermentation tubs. A four-day cold maceration preceded the onset of fermentation, which took 8 days with daily hand plunging and reached a maximum temperature of 35°C.

The fermentation tubs were sealed down for a post-fermentation maceration of a further 9 days.

The fermentation tubs were gently pressed in a small air-bag press and the turbid wine was immediately gravitated to French oak barriques (70% new) to undergo malo-lactic fermentation.

After malo-lactic fermentation the wine was racked off gross lees and a minimal dose of SO₂ was added.

A further two rackings over the twenty months in French oak barriques clarified the wines which were blended, given a light egg white fining and put into bottle without filtration in March of 2009.

The wine is a blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc from the Whalebone Vineyard.

The in-bottle analysis of the Whalebone Vineyard 2007 Merlot Cabernet Franc is:

Alcohol	13.4%
pH	3.59
Total Acid	5.55gpl
Volatile Acid	0.62gpl
SO ₂	72ppm
Sugar	0.40gpl

THE WINE

2007 Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard Merlot Cabernet Franc has the very ripe fruit flavours and texture of this exceptionally small, warm and early vintage.

The Whalebone Vineyard is a special terroir for these two demanding varieties with a heat summation of 1400 to 1500°C days and its bright red clay loam based on 37 million years-old limestone.

The Merlot provides hallmark ripe plum and fruit cake aromas and flavours with big solid tannins and the Cabernet Franc slides in hand in glove with the Merlot providing floral aromatics and a silky tannin finish.

Complementing these typical varietal expressions, the Whalebone Vineyard terroir provides its own unique thumbprint of smoky Eucalypt, earth and anise.

Despite the ripeness the alcohol is in balance and the silky ripe tannins meld with the ripe fruit flavours.

The 2007 Tapanappa Merlot Cabernet Franc is a very special old vine wine and retains the elegant structure and defining tannins of the Whalebone Vineyard terroir.

2007 Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard Merlot Cabernet Franc is *“a pure expression of a unique terroir.”*

WINEMAKER

Brian Croser

Bottled without filtration on the 12th of March 2009. Only 200 cases made. RRP \$75