

TAPANAPPA

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TAPANAPPA 2008 WHALEBONE VINEYARD CABERNET-SHIRAZ

History

Tapanappa acquired the 30 year-old Whalebone Vineyard in 2002 and completely renovated it onto a new trellis supporting a shoot thinned vertical canopy.

There are 4 hectares of Cabernet Sauvignon planted at Tapanappa's Whalebone Vineyard in 1974. Tapanappa also manages 1 hectare of Hopper Vineyard Shiraz directly across the road from Whalebone Vineyard.

The old Cabernet Sauvignon 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 2 tonnes/hectare. The vines have sufficient canopy and root system to fully ripen the harvest relying only on natural rainfall.

Vintage Notes

The 2008 vintage at Tapanappa's Whalebone Vineyard in Wrattenbully was just warmer than average with a heat accumulation for the growing season of 1469°C day versus the average of 1435°C days.

Like 2007 the season began with a devastating frost in October, which reduced crop levels to less than half of normal.

Following the frost the season was mild, warm and dry until February which was significantly cooler than average. Then a 15 day heat event at the beginning of March combined with the low crop levels catapulted the meager crop into sugar ripeness by mid month. We then waited until March the 27th and 28th to harvest flavour and tannin ripe grapes.

The Whalebone Cabernet Sauvignon and Hooper Shiraz yielded less than 2 tonnes/hectare and were harvested and made separately.

The Whalebone Cabernet Sauvignon was harvested at a sugar of 24.9 Brix, pH 3.78 and acid of 6.18 gpl. The Hooper Shiraz had a very similar harvest analysis.

Winemaking Notes

The precious hand harvested Cabernet sauvignon and Shiraz grapes were hand harvested separately and delivered to the winery in Piccadilly.

They were destemmed, partially roller crushed and chilled to 5°C on the way to 0.8 tonne fermentation tubs.

After a cold maceration of 4 days, the fermentation started with daily hand plunging of the cap of skins.

The plunging was increased to twice daily at the peak of fermentation when the temperature reached 32°C.

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The fermentation finished after 9 days and the tubs were sealed down under inert gas for a further 7-day post fermentation maceration on skins.

The young wines were drained and pressed out as separate varieties and gravitated immediately to Nevers and Alliers barriques (30% new) on full lees.

Malo-lactic fermentation finished in barrique by the spring and the wines were racked from less, a small dose of SO₂ was added and the wines were returned to barrique for a total of 20 months in oak.

After clear racking the wines were blended (70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Shiraz) and the blend was bottled without filtration in March 2010.

The in-bottle analysis of Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard 2008 Cabernet-Shiraz is:

Alcohol	14.9%
pH	3.66
Total Acid	5.54gpl
SO ₂	100ppm
Volatile Acid	0.49gpl

The Taste of the Wine

The 2008 Whalebone Vineyard is the product of a warm, ripe vintage.

The ripe blackberry and anise of the Shiraz dominates the aroma although the underlying cassis and herbal spice of the Cabernet Sauvignon add complexity and finesse. As usual, the terroir imprint of Whalebone Vineyard expresses as a smoky Eucalypt and fresh earth aromas.

This is a ripe and highly structured wine, the sweet fruit middle being offset by long and persistent tannins, which contribute a savory balance to this traditional Australian blend.

This is a wine for roasted venison or simply grilled dry aged beef.

2008 Whalebone Vineyard Cabernet Shiraz has the stuffing and tannin to survive with improvement for at least a couple of decades.

Winemaker:

Brian Croser

Bottled in March 2010. Only 460 dozen grown and made.