

# TAPANAPPA

## A U S T R A L I A

### TAPANAPPA 2010 WHALEBONE VINEYARD MERLOT CABERNET FRANC

#### History

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

There are just 1.2 hectares of Merlot and 0.8 hectares of Cabernet Franc planted in 1974 in the Whalebone Vineyard, possibly the first plantings of those varieties in South Australia.

The old Merlot and Cabernet Franc vines of the Whalebone Vineyard have responded magnificently. After a forty-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

1.2 hectares of Merlot and 0.6 hectares of Cabernet Franc were planted in Whalebone Vineyard in 1974 and these old vines provide the fruit for Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard Merlot-Cabernet Franc.

2010 Tapanappa Merlot-Cabernet Franc is 42% Merlot and 58% Cabernet Franc.

The 2010 vintage was the warmest of the 12 vintages that Tapanappa has owned the Whalebone Vineyard. The heat summation was 1608°C days versus the 14-year average of 1446°C days. Since 2010, 2012 and 2013 accumulated nearly the same warmth and each of these three vintages can be acclaimed as excellent to outstanding.

2010 at Whalebone Vineyard was absent heat waves and most of the extra heat was due to a very warm November, the rest of the season being moderate and close to or cooler than average.

A very modest crop of Merlot (2 tonnes/hectare) was harvested on the 17th of March about a week ahead of normal because of the warm November. The Cabernet Franc (3 tonnes/hectare) was harvested on the 26th of March.

The condition of the fruit was excellent and the balance of the fruit allowed the production of moderate alcohol wine with an adequate natural acid.

#### Winemaking notes

The Merlot and Cabernet Franc were hand harvested and delivered to the Tapanappa Winery in the Piccadilly Valley where they were de-stemmed, gently roller crushed and chilled to 2°C in 0.8 tonne fermentation tubs.

A cold maceration of 4 days preceded fermentation. During fermentation the tubs were hand plunged daily for 10 days through peak fermentation temperatures of 32°C and until all sugar had been consumed. At the end of fermentation the tubs were sealed down for a week of extended skin contact.

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21 days after harvest the tubs were tipped into a small air bag press and drained and pressed directly to French oak barriques, 70% new, in which the new wine remained on full lees through malo-lactic fermentation.

At the finish of malo-lactic fermentation, the wine was racked off lees and returned to barrique.

The Merlot and Cabernet Franc were clear raked from barrique, blended and bottled in February 2012 after 22 months in barriques.

The analysis of 2012 Tapanappa Merlot-Cabernet Franc is:

Alcohol	14.3%,
pH	3.42
Total Acid	5.9 gpl.

### The taste of the wine

2010 was a wonderful warm and dry vintage, perfect conditions for the Whalebone Vineyard terroir to elicit the very best from the old Merlot and Cabernet Franc vines.

The warm vintage Merlot from Whalebone Vineyard had very ripe plum and spice with the big blocky tannin structure that is only apparent when Merlot is grown in a highly suited terroir and a warm vintage.

The Cabernet Franc was much more floral and delicate with a whisp of the leafiness for which this noble variety is renowned. The tannin structure of the Cabernet Franc was silky and fine grained.

The combination of the Merlot and Cabernet Franc has a synergy for which the wines of the “right bank” of Bordeaux have long been famed.

In a rare departure from the normal the Cabernet Franc is the dominant part of the blend, 58% and also dominates the aroma, flavour and tannin structure of the 2010 Tapanappa Merlot-Cabernet Franc. The foundation of this wine is solidly Merlot and the superstructure ethereally Cabernet Franc.

2010 Tapanappa Merlot-Cabernet Franc is the product of a great warm vintage and “*is a pure expression of the unique terroir of the Whalebone Vineyard.*”

### Winemaker

Brian Croser

*Bottled in February 2012. Only 400 dozen grown and made.*