

TAPANAPPA

A U S T R A L I A

TAPANAPPA 2015 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

2015 was a very dry and slightly warmer than average vintage at Tapanappa's Whalebone Vineyard in Wrattenbully. Only 40% of average rainfall was recorded from late winter (August) to December so flowering occurred in warm dry sunny conditions, promoting early fruit set and a larger than average crop.

A tropical downpour in January maintained vine health through to ripening and harvest in late March.

2015 was a warmer than average vintage at Whalebone Vineyard at 1522°C-days versus the average at 1486°C-days. The warm dry vintage fully ripened the Merlot and Cabernet Franc at Whalebone Vineyard to a relatively high sugar level and rich ripe flavours.

Winemaking notes

The hand selected bunches of Merlot from Whalebone Vineyard were harvested in mid March and the Cabernet Franc in the last week of March. The bunches were destemmed, partially crushed and chilled to 2°C into 0.9 tonne tubs.

After a 4-day cold maceration, the tubs were inoculated with Tapanappa's own yeast and were hand plunged each day of the 10-day fermentation. The maximum temperature reached was 34°C and after the completion of fermentation the tubs were sealed down for a 7-day post fermentation maceration.

The tubs of Merlot and Cabernet Franc were separately tipped into a small airbag press and pressed straight to French oak barriques, 50% of which were new and the balance 1 use.

In February 2017 after 20 months in oak barriques, the wines were clear racked from barrique and 69% of Merlot and 31% Cabernet Franc were blended for bottling in March 2017.

The post bottling analysis of 2015 Tapanappa Merlot-Cabernet Franc is:

Alcohol	14.8%	pH	3.47
Total Acid	5.2 gpl	Sulphur	71 ppm
Volatile acid	0.41 gpl		

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The taste of the wine

2015 Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard Merlot-Cabernet Franc is one of the ripest flavoured vintages from this unique distinguished site. The aroma is of ripe Merlot blackberry and fruit cake with no leafiness decorated by the floral and spice of Cabernet Franc. The varietal complexity is underpinned by an earthy, smoky Eucalypt bouquet typical of the Whalebone terroir.

The flavours are rich and strong with an underlying fresh varietal complexity. Despite the ripeness of the 2015 vintage the Tapanappa Whalebone Vineyard Merlot-Cabernet Franc has the elegance and finesse expected of this right bank varietal blend. The tannins are fine and grainy providing a savoury and long finish.

This is an excellent Australian example of “the right bank” blend and *a pure expression of the unique Whalebone Vineyard terroir.*

Winemaker

Brian Croser

Only 500 dozen grown and made.