

Arabella Merlot 2006

Succulent flavours of ripe plum and blackcurrent, enhanced by hints of coffee and chocolate. Soft tannins lend a firm structure and a long soft finish.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot

winery : Arabella Wines

winemaker : Stephen de Wet

wine of origin : Robertson

analysis : alc : 14.0 % vol rs : 2.6 g/l pH : 3.6 ta : 5.4 g/l

type : Red **wooded**

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : Soil Types

The vineyards are planted on the floor of what was, many millions of years ago, a great inland lake. Evidence of this lake can be seen in the massive water washed boulders. As the rainfall declined the lake dried up leaving a deposit of calcareous silt many meters thick. The drying of the soil and the effect of the elements cured the top layer of this calcareous silt into rock hard calcium carbonate. At first it was thought that these soils were only suitable for pastures as the roots of orchards and vineyards could not penetrate the calcium carbonate. The era of the big machine, which could rip through the hard calcium carbonate to a depth of 1.5 meters to access the calcareous silt underneath, changed this perception. Vineyards now flourish and produce wonderful wine where there once was arid veldt. A near perfect viticultural terroir has been created where man can manipulate conditions as he sees fit.

Clonal / Rootstock Selection

One clone is used, MO192 - Older Italian selection that has bigger berries and shoulders. It has red berries and grassy characteristics and tends to have bigger productions. Good clone for fruit characters and blends well.

Two rootstocks are used, 101-14 and Richter 110. Some of the older vines were planted with 101-14, but it has become apparent that our soils are more suited to Richter 110. The problem with 101-14 is that it has a shallow root structure and is more prone to suffer from water stress at the critical ripening periods. Conversely, Richter 110 has a stronger root structure which enables us to better control deficit water management in the period before veraison.

about the harvest: Merlot is picked between 7 March and 21 March.

Yield Per Vine: (weighted average) 3 kg

Yield Per HA: (weighted average) 10 tonnes

Maturity Analysis at Harvest (weighted averages): Brix: 25°-26°

in the cellar : Once crushed the wine is pumped into fermentation tanks. Tailored pump overs are done twice daily during fermentation to obtain delicate fruit tannins and maximize flavours and colour extraction. Wine and skins then pumped into an airbag press with a central inflatable membrane. The entire outer cylinder of the press has drainage holes to speed up the process of pressing and increases the amount of juice extracted. Following the gentle pressing, the wine underwent malolactic fermentation in tanks. Wine is then put on French Oak for about 8-10 months to add softness and complexity to the wine.

Growing Season Growing Data (October – April)

Rainfall: 333.7mm

Mean Maximum Temperatures: 24.95°C



Mean Minimum Temperatures: 10.27°C

Vine Age: 3-10 years

Pruning Regime: Cordon/Spur Pruned, Vertical Shoot Positioning