

Peacock Ridge Merlot 2006

A succulent wine with velvety tannins. The fine tannins provide both structure to complement the lush fruit, and also ageing potential. One of those rare South African Merlots that exhibit an appetising complexity of lushness, spice and exuberance. Deep-layered fruit (black cherry and plums), also featuring sweet liquorice.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot

winery : Waterkloof

winemaker : Werner Engelbrecht

wine of origin : Western Cape

analysis : alc : 14.5 % vol rs : 2.1 g/l pH : 3.52 ta : 5.9 g/l va : 0.65 g/l

type : Red **style :** Dry **taste :** Herbaceous **wooded**

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : The vineyards producing the Peacock Ridge range of wines are cultivated on the farm Waterkloof. It is situated on the slopes of Schapenberg in Somerset West. Waterkloof is about five kilometres from the sea, and the vineyards are planted at a height of between 200 and 290 metres above sea level. The soils are of sandstone origin with medium-sized stones, helping with drainage but also a very good ability to retain moisture. All the vineyards on Waterkloof are cultivated under dry land conditions and are trellised to effectively handle the canopy effectively. Strong south-easterly winds occur during the growing season, which helps to control growth and crop. The vineyards are an average age of between 10 and 12 years. Production was 6 ton/ha.

2006 GROWING SEASON

The 2006 vintage was characterised by a cold, wet winter, followed by a relatively dry early growing season, with the wind up on the Schapenberg Hill blowing almost non-stop. This resulted in even smaller than normal bunches and berries, giving more concentration and flavour. Due to the small crop, the vineyards easily managed the dry conditions later in the growing season.

about the harvest: Rains just before harvest, at the end of January, provided much needed moisture when needed, helping the grapes to reach phenological ripeness. The Merlot vineyards were harvested late in February.

in the cellar : The grapes were de-stemmed and fermented with naturally occurring yeasts in stainless steel tanks. A combination of "delestage" and pump-over techniques was used during fermentation to maximise colour and tannin extraction. The wines spend an additional 15 days on the skins after fermentation to help integrate the tannins and stabilise the colour. The skins were separated from the juice by a gentle pressing. All the wine went through malolactic fermentation in barrel. Wine was aged in new (20%) and second-fill (80%) French barrels for ten months.

