

Asara Classic Collection Merlot 2011

Fresh red berry aromas, mint and warm vanillins make this a sweetly inviting nose. A fruit-sweet entry of fresh red berries, with vanillins that linger on. Smooth, balanced and elegant.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot

winery : Asara Wine Estate and Hotel

winemaker : Francois Joubert

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 13.5 % vol rs : 2.7 g/l pH : 3.47 ta : 5.5 g/l

type : Red **style :** Dry

pack : Bottle **size :** 750ml **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : Merlot is one of South Africa's favourite wine varieties for its silky-smooth, fresh and elegant palate. A cultivar of Bordeaux, the best Merlots show flavours akin to ripe red berries and plum, and sometimes, fruit cake or toffee. This is a smooth and elegant wine, delightful and easy to drink.

Much effort is made in preparing the soils in the vineyards used for Asara's Merlot. These are Tukulu soils, nutrient-rich and well-drained, allowing the vines to concentrate their efforts on the grapes. The rows are planted east to west, attracting sunshine twice per day, ensuring proper ripeness without over-exposing the grapes. Located at an altitude of 100m above the sea, the vineyards attract a cooling breeze, ensuring good health: this being critical for freshness of fruit and flavour. The leaves are picked out periodically to ease the flow of air within the vine. The vineyards are aged 10 to 14 years and yield an average of 9 tons per hectare.

about the harvest: The grapes are harvested in the coolness of early morning, and cold macerated briefly to avoid tannin over-extraction.

in the cellar : A colder fermentation is used, at 24°C, to preserve the fruit and ensure the palate is smooth. The grapes are gravity-fed to press, lightly pressed and inoculated for malolactic fermentation in tank. French medium-toast oak staves are used for six months to add a subtle character and complexity. The wine is blended and matured in tank for six months without staves, to enable integration.

