

Ridgeback Merlot 2012

Intense aromatics of dark plum, mulberry and liquorice with a hint of mint. A generously juicy midpalate is well cradled by ripe tannin and lingering pepper wood spice on the long finish.

The bold structure of this Merlot ensures versatility and would pair well with a wide range of game, especially ostrich.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot

winery : Ridgeback Wines

winemaker : Toit Wessels

wine of origin : Paarl

analysis : alc : 14.0 % vol rs : 2.5 g/l pH : 3.69 ta : 5.7 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

ageing : 8 to 10 years

in the vineyard : The North- South facing vineyards are grown in deep Oakleaf soils and are vertically shoot positioned and irrigated according to soil moisture availability and leaf water potential schedules. Leaf plucking in the bunch zone and a narrow canopy enables efficient sunlight penetration into the canopy ensuring ripe tannins and optimal flavour at harvest.

about the harvest: Grapes were handpicked on 24 February 2012. Bunches were healthy and harvested at optimal vine and seed ripeness.

Analysis:

Sugar: 24.9°Balling

Acidity: 5.35g/l

pH: 3.75

in the cellar : The bunches were destemmed onto the sorting table retaining a whole berry component of 40% in the fermenter. The mash was then cold soaked overnight at 12 degrees Celsius. Fermentation was done in open stainless steel fermenters at 24-28 degrees Celsius using a commercial yeast strain specifically suited to the cultivar. Pumpovers were applied twice to three times daily to extract flavour and tannins for structure. The wine also received a rack and return. The mash was pressed immediately after primary fermentation was completed. The wine was then gravity fed to 225l barrels for secondary or Malo-lactic fermentation.

Wine was matured in 24% new and 76% second fill French oak barrels for 18 months and then lightly filtered prior to bottling.

