

Climbing

2006 CLIMBING MERLOT

Defined by altitude, Orange is one of Australia's highest and coolest wine regions starting at 600 metres above sea level. The name Climbing is an active reference to our high altitude vineyard and our continual quest for greater achievement.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

The lead up to harvest 2006 was ideal with moderate rain falling between November and January. The rain stopped well before harvest, so the season was warm, dry and around 2 weeks early.

This wine reflects the maturity of the estate vineyard from which the fruit was sourced. The elevated sections with red soils and a high rock content where the Merlot is planted is the best site for the variety. Here, it sets very well and bunch thinning is undertaken to intensify flavour, giving crops of around 6 tonnes to the hectare.

Fruit for this wine was harvested in peak condition in mid – late March at a sugar level of 13.5 degrees Baume.

WINEMAKER NOTES

Winemakers: Philip Shaw, Debbie Lauritz

Region: Orange, New South Wales

Alcohol: 13.7%

Winemaking notes: The Merlot by passed the crusher and was pressed as whole fruit to capture vibrant fruit. It was then cold soaked for 2-3 days prior to inoculating with native and cultured yeast. Fermentation ensued at up to 30 degrees Celsius during which time the skins were pumped over 2-3 times, tapering off to daily towards the end of ferment. The wine remained on skins for 7-14 days to extract fine grape tannins.

After this process of maceration, the wine was drained off skins and gently pressed. Light pressings were included in the final blend, with the rest of the blend matured in French oak for 14 months. Light egg fining ensured good tannin structure before the wine was bottled in early December 2006.

Maturation: The wine is aged in French Oak Barriques for 14 months.

Tasting Notes: Orange is fast becoming recognised as one of the best regions for merlot in Australia. Climbing Merlot bears this out; it is a rich, vibrant expression of all the positive characters of this variety.

Winemaker Debbie Lauritz describes this wine as showing “real intensity of fruit, with characteristic cooler –climate leafiness and dark berry fruits, with time in barrel adding a lovely weight and softness. It is medium red colour, with bright, elegant, berry fruit integrated with light cigar box oak. Intense fruit, with firm tannins, this wine shows the maturity of the vineyard and low cropping level. This Merlot will age well for 5-8 years.”

Awards: Trophy, 2007 National Cool Climate Wine Show – “Champion Merlot”
Gold, 2007 National Cool Climate Wine Show
Silver, 2007 Orange Wine Show
Bronze, 2007 Royal Perth Show
Bronze, 2007 Riverina Wine Show

