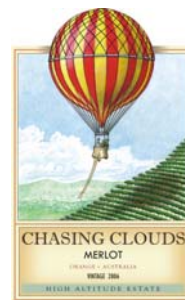


# CHASING CLOUDS



## 2006 MERLOT

### • Chasing Clouds •

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Defined by altitude, Orange is one of Australia's highest and coolest wine regions starting at 600 metres above sea level. The name Chasing Clouds is inspired by that altitude, as well as by our continual quest for greater heights in winemaking. The vines are low yield, providing intense flavours and even berry ripening. The wines exhibit tremendous vibrancy, whilst retaining the elegance characteristic of the high altitude terroir.

### • Winemaker Notes •

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Orange is fast becoming recognised as one of the best regions for merlot in Australia. Chasing Clouds 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.”

### • Vintage Conditions •

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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. Careful canopy management resulted in low crops of around 7.5t/hectare and intense fruit flavour. Fruit for this wine was harvested in peak condition in mid – late March at a sugar level of 13.5 degrees Baume.

### • Vineyard •

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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, is sets very well and bunch thinning is undertaken to intensify flavour, giving crops of around 6 tonnes to the hectare.

### • Vinification •

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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.

### • Analysis •

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Alcohol 13.7%

pH 3.60

Total acidity 5.4 g/L