



2009 SMITH & HOOPER MERLOT

Smith & Hooper craft premium wines within a philosophy naturally expressed by the unique terroir of the region. The ancient geology and moderate climate have transformed the noble Bordeaux varieties of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon into wines of finesse and distinction, with seamless flavours, exceptional palate weight and length.

Wrattobully is one of Australia's most exciting viticultural discoveries of recent times. Blessed with the celebrated soil profile of Terra Rossa over limestone, the region is rapidly establishing a high class reputation for wines of depth and elegance.

VITICULTURE/WINEMAKING

In our vineyards in Wrattobully we have learnt a great deal on how to grow the Merlot grapevine. The canes of Merlot have a tendency to roll over so we now trellis them with a catching wire. This gives the vine structure, stability and allows the grapes to receive dappled light rather than full sun.

The art in Merlot winemaking is avoiding over extraction of the tannins from the fruit and seeds. We make our wines in static fermenters continually tasting the developing wine, pressing the skins when we have structure and weight without tannic hardness. In the pursuit of soft tannins, we are judicious in our oak selection and the wine is in barrel for a maximum of ten months.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

The 2008 winter at Wrattobully was dry and our vineyard managers worked diligently to ensure the vines received sufficient water for the shoot growth essential for growing quality grapes. Heavy rain in December took the pressure off, adding much needed moisture to the soil and freshening the vines. The 2009 red wines from Wrattobully show good deep colour expression, ripe varietal characters and balanced mature tannins.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

The bouquet is reminiscent of briar and cedar infused with rhubarb, backed by spicy clove and tobacco leaf bass notes. The palate is plush and full flavoured with aromatic red berries and black currant flavours apparent. The talc-like tannins give a lingering smooth finish. Will cellar up to six years – best paired with Asian spiced pork belly.

VINTAGE 2009

REGION WRATTONBULLY

WINEMAKER PETER GAMBETTA

HARVESTED MARCH & APRIL 2009

ALC/VOL 13.5%

TOTAL ACID 6.1 G/L

PH 3.48