



2010 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.

Wrattenbully 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 Wrattenbully 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 and 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 eleven months.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

2010 is considered an excellent vintage in Wrattenbully. Rainfall was above average through winter and early spring so the growing season opened with water-filled soils. Good shoot growth was spurred along by warm days and regular showers. Fruit set was even and quick due to a warm spell during flowering that resulted in a moderate cropping level being established. Conditions from December to February were temperate with warm days and cool nights; the Merlot grapes ripened steadily and were harvested early at full ripeness.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

The wine's aroma is inviting and shows a sophisticated meld of berries, clove and cedar spice complemented by earthy forest floor. The palate is lively and bright opening with initial red berries and allspice fruit building to chocolate praline mid palate with soft warm tannins that continue to please long after the wine is tasted. This wine is blended to be enjoyed now and for the next five years. Try matching with an Asian spiced poached pork belly.

VINTAGE 2010

REGION WRATTONBULLY

WINEMAKER PETER GAMBETTA

HARVESTED 5TH TO 28TH MARCH 2010

ALC/VOL 14%

TOTAL ACID 6 G/L

PH 3.45

