



2012 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 was in barrel for a maximum of twelve months.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

The Wrattenbully vintage of 2012 was one of the best. Winter rains gave a full soil moisture profile and was followed by warm conditions during budburst. Temperatures were slightly higher than average during the growing season and a healthy canopy was established. Warmer summer conditions encouraged an even veraison, though a cooler February slowed down sugar accumulation giving a longer "hang" time. At harvest, red grape varieties were deeply coloured with bright flavours and mature tannins.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

The wine's aroma is inviting showing an opulent convergence of berries, clove and allspice with a waft of bay leaf. The palate is lively and bright opening with initial red berries and plum fruit that build to a chocolate praline-like mid palate with soft warm tannins that please long after the wine is sipped.

This wine is blended to be enjoyed now and, at a minimum, the next five years. Try matching with an Asian spiced poached pork belly.

VINTAGE 2012

REGION WRATTONBULLY

WINEMAKER PETER GAMBETTA

HARVESTED 1ST TO 23RD MARCH 2012

ALC/VOL 13.5%

TOTAL ACID 6.1 G/L

PH 3.49

Vegan and vegetarian friendly.

