



# 2014 SMITH & HOOPER MERLOT

*Smith & Hooper crafts premium wines within a philosophy naturally expressed by the unique terroir of the Wratttonbully region. Ancient geology and a moderate climate work together to create wines of finesse and distinction, with seamless flavours, exceptional palate weight and length.*

*Wratttonbully 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 Wratttonbully vineyards 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 so that we have structure and weight, without tannic hardness. In the pursuit of soft tannins, we are judicious in our oak selection, as the wine is matured in barrel for 8 months.

## VINTAGE CONDITIONS

Late spring frosts in Wratttonbully reduced the amount of fruit set, giving the Merlot bunches ample leaf cover and protection from the heat experienced in January and February. This allowed even ripening with full development of flavour and plush tannins.

## WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

A medium depth in colour with red garnet hues. The nose is inviting, showing an opulent confluence of plums, bramble fruits and allspice with a hint of bay. Lively and bright, the palate opens with red berries and plum fruits that build with silky tannins to a long plush finish. This wine is blended to be enjoyed now and, at a minimum, over the next five years.

Try matching with spiced poached pork belly.

**VINTAGE** 2014

**REGION** WRATTONBULLY

**WINEMAKER** PETER GAMBETTA

**HARVESTED** 26TH MARCH - 24TH APRIL

**ALC/VOL** 13.5%

**TOTAL ACID** 5.9 G/L

**PH** 3.43

Vegan and vegetarian friendly.

