

PILOT

THE

BY

ALPHA DOMUS

Technical Notes

2003 'The Pilot' Merlot Cabernet

Vintage conditions

Budburst started early September 2002. Springtime was marked by three severe frosts, affecting mostly the earlier varieties. The remainder of spring was cool and wetter than usual, which allowed healthy cane growth after the frosts. January and early February were hot summer months over which time the vineyard caught up with the season and veraison was about 14 days later than usual. The following months were cool and wet. Brix levels were down and harvest took place from late March till late April.

Vineyard

The grapes for this blend come from both our winery and Hoeve vineyard. We use a variety of clones mostly grafted on 3309 and 101-14. All vines are spur pruned and normal VSP is used with trimming and some leaf plucking. Crop yields are kept at a maximum of 12 tonnes/ha. Shoot thinning and bunch thinning take place as needed. Fruit selection is based on ripeness levels and flavour.

Blend: Merlot 50%, Cabernet Sauvignon 38%, Cabernet Franc 9%, Malbec 3%

Technical Winemaking Details:

Both machine and hand harvested grapes were crushed and destemmed to purpose build red fermentation tanks. After a short cold maceration period the grapes were inoculated and the ferment heated to ~20°C. The ferments were allowed to reach 32°C and remained on skins for between 14 and 21

days. After pressing, the wine was matured in new (15%) and older barriques, both French and American. It was racked five times over the 18 maturation period. Final blending took place a few weeks prior to bottling in November.

Analysis at bottling:

Alcohol	12.5%
pH	3.62
TA	6.4
RS	<2g/L

Harvest date: 28 March – 28 April 2003

Total production 2400 cases

Aroma

A complex aroma of ripe berryfruits, plums, violet, licorice and hints of leather. A background of well integrated spicy oak.

Palate

This is a well balanced wine showing sweet red berry flavours and some savoury notes. The integrated spicy oak is supported by fine tannins and a firm structure.

Food

Enjoy with red meats, pasta, strongly flavoured dishes or cheese.

Cellaring

This wine will drink well mid 2005. Some cellaring will harmonise the wine and soften the palate.
Cellar up until 2007.