



ALPHA DOMUS

— HAWKES BAY —

Technical Notes 2003 The Navigator

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 until late April.

Vineyard

Fruit for this wine was sourced from both our Maraekakaho Road vineyards. 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 8 tons/ha. Shoot thinning and bunch thinning take place as needed. Fruit selection is based on ripeness levels and flavour.

Blend: Merlot 38%, Cabernet Sauvignon 36%, Cabernet Franc 13%, Malbec 13%

Technical Winemaking Details:

Grapes for this wine were mostly hand harvested. The fruit was destemmed, crushed and transferred to tank. After some maceration time the ferment was initiated and warmed to approximately 26°C reaching 32°C at the peak of fermentation. Pump overs took place 4 times daily, with less towards the end. The tanks we use are purpose built for red ferments and each batch is fermented separately. The wine was run off to barrel and skins pressed through a one tonne

basket press. Pressings were kept separate, but blended back, without fining

Analysis at bottling:

Alcohol 13.0%
pH 3.63
TA 5.55
RS <2g/L

Harvest date: 28 March – 24 April 2003

Brix at harvest: 20.8-22.0

Bottling Date: 7 December 2004

Total production 1098 cases

Aroma

A complex aroma of ripe berryfruits, plums, violet, licorice and hints of leather. Influences of sweet vanilla and toast result from oak barrel maturation.

Palate

Plum, blackberry and dried fruits are supported by clove and spicy notes. Game and leathery characters add complexity. The ripe fruit, sweet oak and firm tannins create a robust, complex wine with excellent length.

Food

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

Cellaring

This wine will drink well from mid 2005. Some cellaring will harmonise the wine and soften the palate.

Cellar up until 2010.

