

RADFORD DALE

BRAND	Radford Dale
VARIETAL	Shiraz / Merlot
VINTAGE	2007
APPELLATION	Stellenbosch, South Africa
ANALYSIS	alcohol 14% vol. total acidity 4.9 g/l pH 3.75 residual sugar 1.2 g/l
PRODUCTION	215 (12 x 750ml.) cases



Barossa born Ben Radford and Burgundian raised Alex Dale form a wonderfully unique partnership. Modern winemaking and traditional values combine to create one of the finest and rarest gems of the Cape of Good Hope

VINEYARDS & HARVEST

The two vineyards which are dedicated to this wine are located in two locations on the ocean-side of Stellenbosch, on the Helderberg Mountain and in Devon Valley respectively. These are new clones, planted to high density within the last 15 years and are cropped to low yields of about 40 hl / ha.

2007 was a challenging ripening season, with extreme heat mid-way through vintage followed by inclement and rainy spells subsequently. Shiraz & Merlot are relatively early-ripeners, so although they missed the rains, the February heat-wave certainly accelerated ripening. We are never short of sun, so the viticultural balancing act we pursue each year is to retain balance as best we can, enabling minimal intervention in the winery. Bunch and grape sizes were relatively small and free of rot and only a very small amount of grapes were rejected on the sorting table.

VINIFICATION

Both varieties were picked at the same time and co-fermented in the same tank, using wild yeast, so as to give total integration to the blend from the start. Regular but not excessive pump-overs were carried-out daily, keeping the focus on elegance rather than body-building. Malolactic fermentation was carried-out in barrel, where the wine remained un racked and un fined for 18 months until assembled in tank and settled for 2 months before bottling, unfiltered

BARRELS

In small French (95%) and American (5%) barrels, 1/3 new, the balance in 2nd, 3rd and 4th fill barrels. Micro-oxygenated in barrel prior and subsequent to Malo.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

With this wine we aim to combine the spicy, gutsy temperament and structure of Shiraz with the velvet texture and classic red fruits of Merlot. The seamless blending-through-cofermentation of these grapes has resulted in a wine showing all the great attributes of its parents, while developing a personality of its own fit. Perhaps the most seductive aspect being its combination of restraint and exuberance. Ripe though firm tannins and a mineral intensity provide the framework to support and tame the ripe fruit and the warm climate aura of the juice. The partnership between these varieties arguably provides for a more harmonious liaison than the more 'popular' so-called Bordeaux blends, which we believe are somewhat out-of-place in our climate and geology.