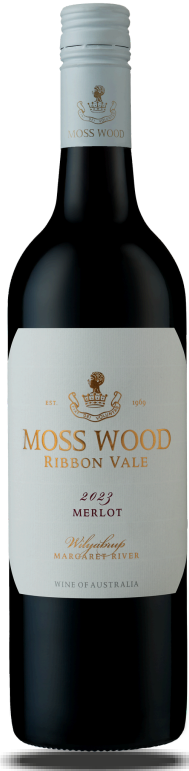




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RIBBON VALE 2023 MERLOT

VINTAGE NOTES

The 2022/23 growing season at Ribbon Vale proceeded without major disruption and allowed the vineyard to progress in a measured and consistent manner. For the 2022 calendar year, rainfall totalled 1114mm, approximately 9% above the long-term average. For a dry-grown vineyard, this resulted in adequate soil moisture reserves at the commencement of the growing season.

Spring conditions were generally favourable, although rainfall during flowering influenced final yields. Between October and the end of November, while the vines were flowering and setting fruit, 89mm of rain was recorded. While not excessive, this rainfall coincided with flowering and is reflected in reduced fruit set and the lower-than-average yields recorded for several varieties, particularly Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot.

Following flowering, conditions became relatively dry. From the beginning of December through to harvest, only 18.8mm of rain fell. This limited rainfall, together with the soil moisture established earlier in the season, allowed ripening to continue without evident water stress while maintaining low disease pressure. Canopies remained healthy, and fruit development progressed steadily rather than being driven by rapid sugar accumulation.

Summer temperatures were moderate, with no prolonged heat events. Ripening was unhurried, with harvest commencing in late March and extending into April. Cabernet Sauvignon cropped at 5.6 tonnes per hectare, approximately 17% below its long-term average of 6.73 t/ha, and was harvested three days later than average. Merlot produced 5.4 t/ha, around 28% below its long-term average, and was harvested nine days later than usual.

Taken together, the distribution of rainfall, moderate temperatures and restrained yields resulted in an extended ripening period across the vineyard. Fruit was harvested without pressure, allowing flavour and tannin development to keep pace with sugar accumulation. The wines reflect these conditions and the stress-free nature of the 2023 season

MEDIAN HARVEST DATE

Merlot – 30th March 2023
Cabernet Franc – 5th April 2023
Cabernet Sauvignon – 30th March 2023

HARVEST RIPENESS

Merlot – 13.2° Be
Cabernet Franc – 12.8° Be
Cabernet Sauvignon – 13° Be

YIELD

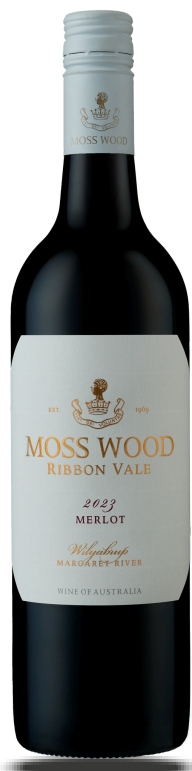
Merlot – 5.4 t/ha
Cabernet Franc – 7.8 t/ha
Cabernet Sauvignon – 5.6t/ha



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PRODUCTION NOTES

All fruit was hand-picked. After destemming, the Merlot was placed into closed fermenters and cold soaked to enhance colour and aroma before being warmed and seeded for primary fermentation. Extraction was managed by pump overs, with temperatures maintained below 32°C throughout the fermentation. The fruit remained on skins for 14 days before being pressed.

Following pressing and malolactic fermentation, the wine was matured in 228-litre French oak barriques, with 18% new oak for 28 month. The final blend comprises 86% Merlot, with 7% Cabernet Sauvignon and 7% Cabernet Franc. The wine remained unfinned and was sterile filtered and bottled on 4th August 2025.

TASTING NOTES

Colour and Condition: Medium to deep ruby hue; bright condition.

Nose: Plum, blackberry and dark cherry, with violet, spice and earthy undertones.

Palate: Medium to full bodied, with generous fruit of black cherry and mulberry, supported by supple but clearly defined tannins. The balance is sound, with fresh acidity and a savoury finish.

CELLARING

Ribbon Vale Merlot shows its best form in seasons where ripening proceeds steadily rather than being driven by heat. While approachable in its youth, the wine is clearly structured for extended cellaring. We recommend a minimum of 10 years in bottle, with full maturity expected between 20 and 25 years.

BOTTLING

4th August, 2025

BLEND

86% Merlot
7% Cabernet Sauvignon
7% Cabernet Franc

RIPENING TIME FROM FLOWERING TO HARVEST

Merlot – 119 days
Cabernet Franc – 121 days
Cabernet Sauvignon – 128 days

ALCOHOL

14%