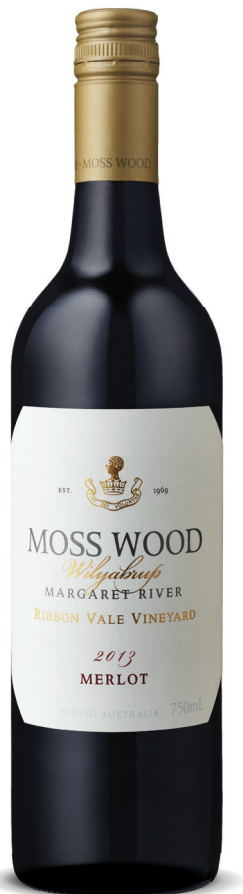




# MOSS WOOD

*Wilyabrup*  
MARGARET RIVER  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



#### BLEND

92% Merlot  
8% Cabernet Franc

#### ALCOHOL

13.5%

#### OAK MATURATION

30 months

#### HARVEST DATES

Merlot – 12/3/2013  
Cabernet Franc – 4/3/2013

#### BOTTLING DATE

1/10/2015

#### RELEASE DATE

18/11/2015

#### VINTAGE RATING

10/10

## MOSS WOOD 2013 RIBBON VALE MERLOT

### TASTING NOTES

This wine has deep brick red colour and is in bright condition.

The nose is a bright expression of Merlot fruit, combining blackcurrant, mulberry and toffee apple. It is also quite complex, with plenty of leather and tar in the background.

A similar theme shows on the palate, with mouth-filling red and black fruits, sitting over full body and firm tannin. There is good length and the tannins are well balanced, with an astringency that gives a bituminous finish but doesn't leave the mouth dry or gritty.

### VINTAGE NOTES

We had a generally excellent growing season and yet we began the 2013 vintage with a degree of fear and trepidation. This was not because of any quality concerns but rather, we'd had a monumental hail storm on 30th November, 2012, the likes of which we hadn't seen since 1996 and we were worried just how small our yields were going to be. The thing is, it is possible to see the damage but we don't know the true extent until we actually start picking.

The first of the Ribbon Vale reds to come off was the Cabernet Franc on 4th March and its yield was down by 30%, which wasn't as bad as expected. When we started Merlot 8 days later, we hoped for the same and yes, we were in luck. That left Cabernet Sauvignon, which started on 27th March and sadly our hopes were dashed – its yield was down by just over 50%. Such is life in agriculture. What did matter was quality and that was very encouraging.

Despite the stormy conditions outlined above, the season was warm to hot, especially at the end of December where we had one day with a maximum of 40°C, the hottest day for the summer. January temperatures eased but things warmed again at the beginning of February, although not quite as hot as December. March delivered typical autumn weather, so all the varieties moved gently to full maturity, especially Cabernet Sauvignon.

### PRODUCTION NOTES

Cabernet Franc was hand-picked and destemmed into a small, open tank, seeded with a pure yeast culture and allowed to ferment at up to 30°C and hand plunged 3 times per day. After 13 days it was pressed to stainless steel, underwent malolactic fermentation and was finally racked to barrel on 13th April, 2013. The casks were all 228 litre French oak.

Merlot was hand-picked and destemmed into static fermenters, seeded with pure yeast culture and allowed to ferment up to 30°C and were pumped over 3 times per day. Skin contact time was 16 days, after which the wine was pressed to stainless steel. Malolactic fermentation was carried out by selected bacteria and after MLF the wine was racked to 228 litre French oak barrels on 23rd April, 2013.

The Merlot blend was made up on 3rd March, 2015 and consisted of 92% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc. It was then returned to barrel where it stayed until 14th September 2015 when, after 30 months aging, it was racked to stainless steel. Fining trials were carried out but none improved the wine, so it was left unfinned and then sterile filtered and bottled on 1st October, 2015.

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### CELLARING NOTES

The brightness and balance mean this wine lends itself to early drinking and is really quite enjoyable now. However, it will certainly age well and we recommend it for at least 20 years cellaring. This will allow it to build its secondary notes of leather and tar, enhancing and rounding the palate with softer tannins.

PO Box 225, Cowaramup, Western Australia 6284 AUSTRALIA

T: +61 8 9755 6266 E: [mosswood@mosswood.com.au](mailto:mosswood@mosswood.com.au) W: [www.mosswood.com.au](http://www.mosswood.com.au)

@Moss\_Wood MossWoodWinery @mosswood