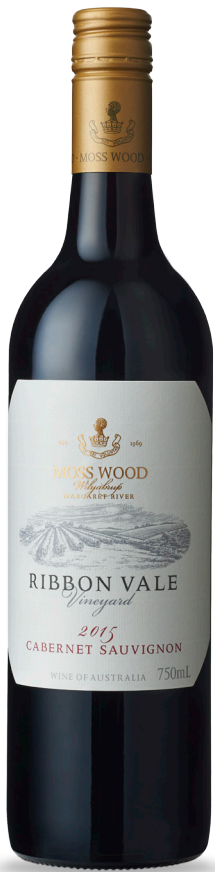




MOSS WOOD

Wilyabrup
MARGARET RIVER
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Median Harvest Date

Cabernet Sauvignon: 27/03/2015
Merlot: 12/03/2015
Cabernet Franc: 04/03/2015

Bottled

29/08/2017

Released

19/10/2017

Median Harvest Ripeness

Cabernet Sauvignon: 13.7° Be
Merlot: 12.6° Be
Cabernet Franc: 13.2° Be

Yield

Cabernet Sauvignon: 3.55 t/ha
Merlot: 5.46 t/ha
Cabernet Franc: 5.79 t/ha

Alcohol

13.5%

Ripening Time from Flowering to Harvest

Cabernet Sauvignon: 125 days
Merlot: 118 days
Cabernet Franc: 118 days

MOSS WOOD RIBBON VALE 2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

TASTING NOTES

Colour and condition: The colour is a very youthful brick red and the condition is bright.

Nose: This wine shows the style of the 2015 vintage and quite likely the impact of the small crop. In such years, Cabernet Sauvignon in particular, has a complex but somewhat subdued nose, where the wine hints of the underlying power and complexity but takes years to reveal its true colours. So here we see smouldering red currant, black currant and mulberry, with a floral, violet lift, sitting over cedar and tar.

Palate: On the palate there is concentration and length - dark fruits combining with firm tannin and leather and tarry notes.

VINTAGE NOTES

Before we get too carried away, we must acknowledge the sheer quality of the 2015 vintage. While we lay claim to being competent grapegrowers and winemakers, it's all easy-peasy when Mother Nature serves us up a year like this, one that will likely join the ranks of Margaret River's finest. All the numbers speak to the quality. During calendar year 2014 we had 1244mm of rain, around 25% above average, so our unirrigated vineyards were well watered. The temperatures during the growing season were consistently warm, without extreme heat. There were 33 hours when the temperature exceeded 33°C and the hottest day was only 37.3°C - the sort of conditions where the Bordeaux varieties move steadily to full flavour ripeness.

For all its greatness, 2015 had a down side - yield. Cabernet Sauvignon cropped at a pitiful 3.55 tonnes/hectare, 50% below average and Merlot and Cabernet Franc continued the theme. The former produced 5.46 t/ha, down 33% and the latter 5.79 t/ha, down 30%. Our best explanation for this lies with inclement conditions during flowering. Over the 6 week period when the Cabernet varieties bloomed there was 70mm rain and 15 days when the temperature dropped below 8°C, so fruit set was poor and bunches were around 30% lighter than usual.

So, to the harvest. The Cabernet Franc came off on 4th March at 13.2° Baume, the Merlot on 12th March at 12.6° Baume ripeness, and Cabernet Sauvignon on 27th March at 13.7° Baume.

Each batch was hand-picked, destemmed then transferred to small open tanks for fermentation and hand plunged 3 times per day for extraction of colour and flavour.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Cabernet Sauvignon was on skins for 15 days, the Merlot for 15 days and Cabernet Franc for 14 days. After fermentation the Cabernet Sauvignon was racked to barrels on 27th May 2015, the Merlot on 13th April 2015 and Cabernet Franc on 31st March 2015. All the barrels were 228 litre French oak and the Cabernet Sauvignon received 19% new and the Merlot received 9%.

In December 2016 all the batches were racked to stainless steel for blending. After blind tastings, the Cabernet Sauvignon was blended with 3% each of Merlot and Cabernet Franc. The finished wine was then returned to barrel.

On 21st August 2017 the wine was racked to stainless steel in preparation for bottling. Fining trials were carried out but none improved the wine, so it was then sterile filtered and bottled on 28th August 2017.

CELLARING NOTES

It is most definitely a candidate for cellaring and will need at least 10 years to develop some mature characters and then a further 10 years to reach full maturity. However, its generous young fruit characters will definitely provide enjoyable drinking in the short term.

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