



GOLD LEAF RESERVE

merlot ▫ 2015

Beginning its life as small, concentrated berries showing great promise, after hand picking, hand plunging and basket pressing the depth was undeniable. For the next 30 months of its life, this Merlot aged beautifully in French oak barrels.

Earth and Vine

This Merlot was grown by our neighbours Ingrid and Dave Howell in Eden Valley town. The north-south aligned vines are grown on in shallow, sandy soils on a slight east-aspect slope. The grapes received minimal irrigation and were grown using low-intervention organic methods.

The 2015 season featured a hot and dry summer, followed by a mild but dry autumn with perfect ripening conditions, so the grapes were ready to hand-pick on the 15th of March. Coming off the vines a particularly small and concentrated berry, a result of deficit irrigation during development and the dry season. Following the results these are conditions we are hoping to emulate in the future.

From Vine to Wine

The grapes were crushed and transferred to an open top fermenter which we plugged every 6-8 hours and controlled the temperature to a peak of 28 degrees. The wine was gently basket pressed before ageing in aged and new French hogsheads until it was bottled in 2018.

Batch Size: 350 bottles

Analysis: Alc: 14.1%, pH: 3.4

The Senses

Surprising intensity rarely found in Merlot, the aroma is rich plum and spice with hints of blackberry and cherry. On the smooth palate there is dark cherry, plum and chocolate.

Cellaring

With strong structure, oak influence and screwcap closure, this wine is continuing to improve, drinking beautifully now likely to peak around 2030.

