

Shannon Black

2017

Each year one of the 5 aspects or clones of the Mount Bullet 3ha single vineyard shows unique characteristics of that particular vintage. If special enough it is nurtured further in the cellar and then a small amount has an extraordinary sovereign hand bottling, so to ensure that this classic expression is captured in bottle forever.

Technical Notes

The grapes are picked from a small 3 hectare vineyard. The vineyard is divided up into 5 different parcels each with its own respective clone. The soil, trellising and canopy management is constant through out the vineyard so it is the actual clonal characteristics that determine the different dates of harvest.

Over the years we have learnt that there is as much as 11 – 14 days difference between picking the first clone to picking the last clone. The bunches are chilled to 3°C before being sorted on a conveyor and destemmed. Berries are then hand sorted, before cold maceration ensues for 3 to 6 days at 8°C. We try to naturally ferment 100% of the parcel of grapes making up the Shannon Black. Fermentation temperatures vary between 26 – 30°C. After pressing, the wine is racked and left to complete its malolactic fermentation and maturation in oak barriques.



Styling

Considerable emphasis is placed on capturing the clone expressions and therefore the parcel is vinified and matured separately. The wine has a fragrance of ripe red fruits such as plums and dark cherries, with earthy complexity and yet still expressing minerality. Maintaining a good acidity lends to outstanding freshness with a well integrated ripe and seductive tannin structure. Incorporating a minimal winemaking intervention approach, such as natural ferment and only two “punch downs” daily, retains silkiness and elegance.

Maturation

100% matured in barriques (225L) for approximately 22 months using 1 of 3 Bordeaux cooperages. The oak used is of a tighter grain and medium toasted.
 New oak – 50%, 2nd fill – 50%

<i>Wine Analyses</i>		<i>Clone Selection</i>
Variety:	100% Merlot	# MO 343: 100%
Alcohol:	14.5 %	
Acidity:	6.4 g/l	
pH:	3.26	
Residual sugar:	3.2 g/l	
Clones planted:	MO 03, 12, 192 and MO 343 and 348	
Rootstock:	Richter 110	
Soil types:	Mostly Table Mountain Sandstones with a high percentage of quartz silica crystal and a deeper kaolin clay base.	
Aspect of vineyards:	East facing slopes.	
Ha planted:	3 ha	
Planting distance:	2.2m x 1.2m	
Vines per hectare:	3787 vines	
Trellis system:	Vertical shoot positioning	
Irrigation:	Micro irrigation.	
Average Production:	5 tons per hectare.	
Harvest dates:	On average last week of March and first week of April.	
Altitude:	260 metres to 300 metres above sea level.	