

# AMATRA RANGE

## 2016 MERLOT

### ORIGIN:

Elgin Valley, South Africa

### CULTIVARS:

Merlot: 96%  
Cab Franc: 4 %

### TASTING NOTE:

French clone (348) Merlot exudes bright, fresh black plums. Plush purple fruit flavours are supported by a vibrant thread of fresh acidity from the addition of a small splash of Cabernet Franc to harmoniously balance the opulently textured mid core palate weight.

### PHILOSOPHY:

To create a complex, mouth filling wine from ripened clusters with purple fruit opulence and restrained tannin structure in cool climate conditions. Optimal vine ripeness and canopy management, in particular, are key to producing seamless Merlot that is perfectly suited to the Elgin Valley.

### VINEYARDS:

Vines grown on deep Tukulu soils (a mixture of sandstone, gravels and clay) on a drought resistant rootstock, as Merlot is particularly heat sensitive, are trellised on a five wire fence system facing east. French clone 348 best suits this relatively warm site as it produces wines of elegance, bright purple fruit and purity. Cabernet Franc is from a warmer slopes in the cool Elgin Valley and are grown on a shallow gravel top layer with clay underlying.

Stringent canopy management is implemented, as the vigour of crop and leaf canopy is very high. Clusters are hand-picked towards end of March in small batches of 18kg.

### WINEMAKING:

Clusters were de-stemmed and partially crushed after stringent sorting to remove unwanted berries and other matter. Spontaneous fermentation occurs in small fermentation vats for after about fourteen days and once primary fermentation is completed, the mash is pressed in a small basket press. The wine is then decanted

to small French oak casks for secondary Malo-lactic fermentation and left to mature for 12 months. The final barrel selection is made and taken through a very light filtration prior to bottling. No finings are applied to ensure that natural integrity and structure of the resultant wine is maintained.

ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 13.93% ; Acidity: 5.30g/l ; pH: 3.56 ; Residual Sugar: 3.0g/l ; Total Extract: 30.0g/l

RECOMMENDED FOOD PAIRING:

Best cut of Beef, robust country pastas, char- grilled meat and hearty casseroles.

RECOMMENDED BOTTLE MATURATION:

In its youth, broad and bright purple fruit is forward and over time will evolve to stewed prunes, blonde tobacco and hazelnuts with seamless, mellowed tannins on the finish. Wine should mature for 8 to 10 years under optimal cellar conditions.

RELEASE DATE:

November 2017

ACCOLADES:

90 Points: (2015) Tim Atkin Report, 2016 to be reviewed  
4\* John Platter Guide