

TYRRELL'S RUFUS STONE HEATHCOTE SHIRAZ 2004



Situated approximately 100 kms north of Melbourne, Heathcote is undoubtedly one of Australia's most exciting new higher altitude red wine producing regions. Tyrrell's planted their Heathcote vineyard in 1994 on the ancient russet red Cambrian soil which is found at the foot of Mt Camel at the southern end of the Colbinabbin Range. This narrow strip with its unique topography, gives the wine its rich, yet refined flavours that typifies Heathcote wines – especially Shiraz. The vines are relatively low yielding and produce grapes which are commended for their ability to fully ripen, yet still retain excellent levels of natural acidity and fine grained tannins.

VINTAGE

The growing season experienced the best Winter and Spring rains for the last three years, considering the prolonged drought conditions. A dry Summer and Autumn with strong winds experienced in parts of the region resulted in non-irrigated vineyards suffering from stress. The fruit was clean, in good health, and well ripened.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Picked at 15.5° Baume and then fermented in potter tanks for ten days for maximum extraction. A third of the wine was pressed off at 2.0° Baume to finish primary fermentation in barrel – this helped to achieve a seamless oak-fruit flavour integration. 20% of the wine had a further two weeks post fermentation maturation on skins to add complexity and texture to the palate structure. All of the wine then went through malolactic fermentation in 70% French and 30% American oak barriques. Because of the concentration and intensity of the fruit that year, a higher than usual percentage of new oak was used – 40% new with the balance of 60% as one and two year old barriques. After 15 months maturation in oak, the different components were blended in September and then bottled in November 2005 with a screwcap seal.

Alcohol 14.95% pH 3.40 Acid 6.65g/L

TASTING NOTES

Dark reds and deep purple in colour, an indication of the intensity of this wine and a signature of Central Victorian Shiraz. The nose shows lifted spice with fruit flavours of ripe blackberries and the softer vanillin characteristics of both French and American oak barriques. Flavours on the palate are balanced showing fruit richness, savoury undertones with an elegant and complex structure. The finish is long, and tightly held together by the thread of acidity, so important to the wines of this region. This style of wine, although enjoyable now, will display the benefits of cellaring in years to come.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

The intense berry fruit flavours and mouth-filling appeal of this rich red wine makes it a fine accompaniment for lamb, beef and game dishes.

AWARDS

The 2004 vintage has been awarded 2 bronze medals. Since its inception in 1997, Rufus Stone Heathcote Shiraz has been awarded 1 trophy, 9 gold, 17 silver and 39 bronze medals.

OTHER WINES IN THE RANGE

• Rufus Stone McLaren Vale Shiraz • Rufus Stone McLaren Vale Cabernet Sauvignon / Malbec • Rufus Stone Heathcote Pinot Noir

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