



# OAK VALLEY

## Oak Valley Blend 2011

Elgin is the coldest wine region in South Africa. This long and slow ripening period, similar to that of the Right Bank of Bordeaux, allows us to create beautiful Merlot dominated blends with Cabernet Franc in support and a dash of Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot adding complexity.

### Technical Notes

Grapes are harvested from three different sites, the valley vineyard, a north facing slope and south facing mountain vineyard. Yields in the mountain are ultra-low; Merlot averages 4 tonnes p/ha while the lower lying Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon yield above 6 tonnes p/ha. Canopy is opened in the bunch zone a week before harvest to avoid green flavours. In the cellar, berries are individually hand sorted before cold maceration ensues for 5 days at 8°C. Cultivated yeast is added and fermentation occurs between 26-30°C. Three pump-overs and several punch-downs per day ensure gentle extraction of flavours from the skins. After fermentation, the wine undergoes another period of skin contact before pressing. Malolactic fermentation occurs in tank then the wine is matured for 16 months in 60% new French oak and the remainder 2nd fill.

### Styling

The 2011 Blend comprises 45% Merlot, 35% Cabernet Franc, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Petit Verdot. An intricate bouquet ranging from fruit-driven mulberries and blackcurrants to wonderful spicy and earthy element. Flavours of dark cherry and black plums, mushrooms and cured meats. This is a medium to full bodied, elegant wine from the cool climate of Elgin. Drinking beautifully now, but will continue to age gracefully in bottle.

### Wine Analysis

Alcohol	14.5%
Total acidity	5.4 g/l
pH	3.57
Volatile acid	0.66 g/l
Residual sugar	3 g/l

### Vineyard

Aspect	South-west and north facing slopes
Elevation	350-580m
Soil type	Medium texture gravelly soils with structured clay layer
Cultivar	Merlot (45%), Cabernet Franc (35%), Cabernet Sauvignon (5%), Petit Verdot (15%)
Rootstock	R99, R110, Ruggeri 140
Planting date	2000-2005
Ha planted	6.62 ha
Irrigation	Drip irrigation, post-harvest irrigation mostly
Trellising	Extended Perold
Vines per ha	2564-3333 vines/ha
Harvest dates	25 March - 1 April 2011

