



Wrattenbully Limited Edition Merlot 2002

Smith & Hooper wines are sourced entirely from two Wrattenbully estate vineyards - adjacent vineyard blocks previously owned by the Smith and Hooper families. These are premium red wines from exceptional vineyard sites where the winemaking philosophy is to let the terroir speak for itself - and it does. The elements of soil and climate at Smith & Hooper have transformed the noble varieties of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon into wines of finesse and distinction.



WINEMAKING / VITICULTURE

Wrattenbully is located in the South East of South Australia approximately 50 kilometres north of Coonawarra. Wrattenbully has a similar climate and soil types to Coonawarra although temperatures are on average one degree warmer. It is the similarity to Coonawarra that led winemakers to develop the region primarily for red wines. Early indications are that Merlot has the potential to be outstanding and it may yet be proven that this is the finest area for Merlot in Australia. Hooper's vineyard undulates across gentle slopes and Smith's is set on slopes surrounding a shallow basin. The soils are classic "terra rosa" of red brown earths over a decayed limestone base.

The growing season for 2001-02 at Wrattenbully was cool and wet with rainfall well above average until mid January. Conditions were dry from January to harvest, though temperatures were 2 to 5°C below average, delaying harvest by two weeks.

Grapes were picked from a single block within the Hooper vineyard. They were then fermented in a wide based static fermenter. After crushing, the grapes were given a "soak" for five days before fermentation was initiated. The wine spent a total of 20 days on skins before being pressed after which the wine was transferred to oak barrels and malolactic fermentation was completed (usually) within a month. The barrels were then individually selected prior to final blending.

TASTING NOTE

Smith & Hooper Limited Release Merlot 2002 shows medium depth colour with a garnet crimson hue. The early impression on the nose is of savoury and sage opening to chocolate, cedar and fruitcake. The palate is medium to full bodied with a forward fruit sweetness enlivened by some oak spice and warm berry fruits. The wine finishes with suppleness and soft tannins.

VINTAGE INFORMATION

Vintage	2002
Region	Wrattenbully
Winemaker	Peter Gambetta
Harvested	April & May 2002
Oak Treatment	Matured for 15 months in new American hogsheads (20%), one-year-old French barriques (60%), balance in two-year-old French hogsheads
Alc/Vol	13.5%
Total Acid	7.2 g/L
pH	3.41

