



## **LES COTEAUX MERLOT 2018**

### **VINTAGE CONDITIONS**

The 2018 harvesting season was challenging due to prolonged drought conditions. The crop was therefore generally smaller, but the grapes were very healthy. Berries were also much smaller in size than usual which led to greater fruit and flavour concentration.

### **THE HARVEST AND VINIFICATION**

The Merlot grapes were harvested at full ripeness from 31 January 2018 through to 14 February 2018. At the cellar a manual sorting was done to remove any leaves or sub-standard bunches before the grapes were destemmed and crushed.

The grape mash was conveyed to a stainless-steel fermentation tank where there followed cold maceration where after it was inoculated with a selected yeast strain to start the alcoholic fermentation. During the fermentation on the skins the wines were pumped over gently at regular intervals to extract the desired colour and flavor.

Upon completion of the of the alcoholic fermentation the wine rested on the skins for up to three weeks before being removed and the skins pressed dry in a basket press. Thereafter the wine went through Malo-lactic fermentation and when this process was finished the wine was removed to French oak barrels for ageing.

The 2018 Merlot spent 18 months in barrels during which time it harmonized with the wood and stabilized its tannin structure. The final blend contains 13% Tinta Barocca.

### **THE WINE**

This Merlot has a vibrant, brick-red colour. Macerated red and black fruit aromas fill the nose. Notes of pepper, herbs and almonds add to the aromatic complexity. The palate shows the acidity well balanced with the tannins thus creating a harmonious mouthfeel. The wine leaves a dry finish and an enduring aftertaste.

The wine has an alcohol of 14,33%, acidity of 5,7 g/l, pH of 3.51 and residual sugar of 3.8 g/l.