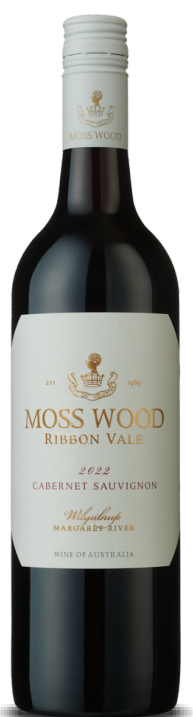




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RIBBON VALE 2022 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

VINTAGE NOTES

In keeping with our normal practice of explaining our wine styles by focusing on the growing season in which we made them, it's nice that we can publish a wonderfully simple report for the Ribbon Vale 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon and 2022 Merlot.

Mother Nature was in a very benign frame of mind.

Rainfall for calendar year 2021 was a record-breaking 1440mm, so our unirrigated vineyards had plenty of soil moisture. However, during the flowering period for the Cabernet varieties at Ribbon Vale, 13th November to 20th December, there were only 11 days of rain, which delivered 21mm. At the same time, there were only 5 nights when the temperature dropped below 8°C. Here's an amusing fact – despite being well into summer, the lowest minimum of 4.3°C occurred on 19th December, by which time flowering was effectively finished.

These types of conditions would normally reward us with higher yields but that's not how things turned out. Cabernet Sauvignon was down 27% to 4.92t/ha, Cabernet Franc was down 17% to 6.45t/ha, Malbec was down 26% to 3.97t/ha and Petit Verdot was down 56% to 1.16t/ha. Only Merlot managed to fly the flag, producing a yield of 8.04t/ha, 5% above average.

MEDIAN HARVEST DATE

Cabernet Sauvignon – 14th April, 2022
Cabernet Franc – 5th April, 2022
Merlot – 4th April, 2022
Malbec – 12th April, 2022
Petit Verdot - 12th April, 2022

HARVEST RIPENESS

Cabernet Sauvignon – 13.3° Be
Cabernet Franc – 13.1° Be
Merlot – 13.0° Be
Malbec – 13.2° Be
Petit Verdot 13.5° Be

YIELD

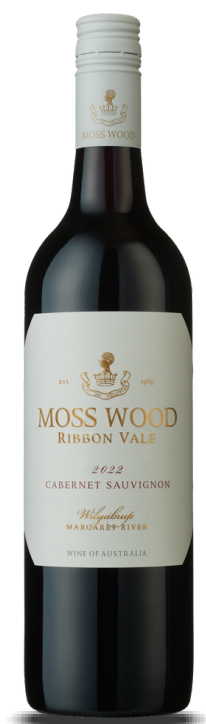
Cabernet Sauvignon – 4.92 t/ha
Cabernet Franc – 6.45 t/ha
Merlot – 8.04 t/ha
Malbec – 3.71 t/ha
Petit Verdot 1.16 t/ha



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RIBBON VALE 2022 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The explanation lies in the temperatures. The Ribbon Vale Cabernet Sauvignon experienced 1078 hours between 18°C and 28°C, so plenty of time in the preferred range for good ripening. However, we also received 118 hours above 33°C, and there were some warm days, especially Boxing Day 2021, when the mercury hit 41.2°C. Toasty warm! That's the second warmest day we've recorded, the hottest being 25th February 1985, when we got to 41.5°C. The warm weather lasted through until mid-February and then eased in the autumn, to the point where Cabernet Sauvignon needed 132 days to reach full ripeness, 6 days longer than average. The point is, despite the mild finish, there was sufficient heat load earlier in the cycle to have a negative effect on the yield.

Overall, we were pleased with how things had gone and we had no problems with fungal disease or bird damage and so the fruit was in excellent condition when harvest began with Merlot on 4th March.

BOTTLING

2nd August, 2024

BLEND

90% Cabernet Sauvignon
2.5% Merlot
2.5% Cabernet Franc
2.5% Malbec
2.5% Petit Verdot

RIPENING TIME FROM FLOWERING TO HARVEST

Cabernet Sauvignon – 134 days
Cabernet Franc – 126 days
Merlot – 127 days
Malbec – 131 days
Petit Verdot - 129 days

ALCOHOL

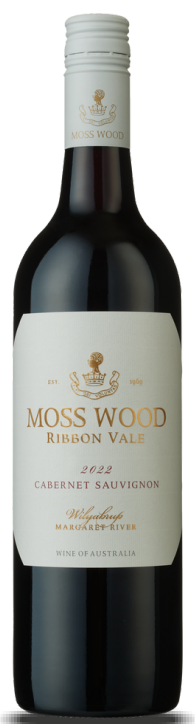
14%



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RIBBON VALE 2022 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

PRODUCTION NOTES

As is always the case, picking was done by hand, then the fruit is delivered to the winery to be destemmed and sorted. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Malbec were transferred to small open tanks and seeded with multiple yeast strains for primary fermentation. Once this was underway each batch was hand plunged 3 times per day and time on skins varied from 13 to 16 days. Temperatures are controlled to a maximum of 32°C.

Merlot is treated slightly differently and placed into closed tanks, where it was chilled to 10°C and allowed to cold soak. After 48 hours, the cooling was turned off and the temperature returned to ambient. Once it had reached 18°C the batches were seeded with multiple yeast strains for primary fermentation and pumped over 3 times per day, with temperatures also controlled to 32°C.

After pressing to stainless steel tanks, each batch underwent malolactic fermentation and was then adjusted with SO₂ and racked to barrel. All barrels were 228 litres French oak barriques and in the Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% were new.

In September 2023, all the different batches were racked and blended in stainless steel. The final makeup of the Ribbon Vale Cabernet Sauvignon was 90% of that variety, plus 2.5% each of Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Malbec.

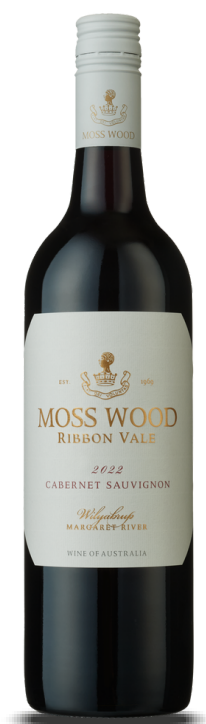
The blended wine was then returned to barrel, for the final period of aging, where it stayed until July 2024. In all, it spent 26 months in wood. It was racked to stainless steel and fining trials were prepared but none of the agents improved the wine and so it remain unfined. It was then sterile filtered and bottled on 2nd August, 2024.



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RIBBON VALE 2022 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

TASTING NOTES

Colour and Condition: Deep crimson, brick red hue; bright condition.

Nose: This is dominated by dark fruits - blackberry, mulberry, black currant, and plum, with variations on that theme like blueberry yoghurt, Black Forest cake, dark licorice and jubes. Behind these are the complex notes such as violets, cedar, tobacco, tar and toasty oak.

Palate: The wine has full body, with intense black fruit flavours of blackberry, mulberry, boysenberry, cassis and dark cherry, plus background notes of black olive, licorice, dark chocolate, vanilla custard, tobacco, cedar and dried spices like cinnamon and nutmeg. Tannins and acid are very well balanced, with a presence running through the mid and back palate. Everything is well integrated giving a soft, plush mouthfeel.

CELLARING

Continuing the comparison with 2008, where the Cabernet Sauvignon aligns even more closely, we certainly encourage those with the opportunity to cellar the 2022 Ribbon Vale. It will take at least 10-15 years to develop some bottle bouquet and a further 10-15 years beyond that to complete the process. Beyond 30 years of age, there will be no rapid decline and it should continue to drink well into its 5th decade.