

MAIN DIVIDE

MERLOT CABERNET

- MARLBOROUGH -

WINE OF NEW ZEALAND

Main Divide is the local name for the Southern Alps and is the backbone of the South Island, where grapes for Main Divide are exclusively sourced. Vineyards have been selected for their quality and ability to express unique regional flavours.



MERLOT CABERNET 2008 TASTING NOTE

A mild spring and hot, dry, early summer shaped this growing season and ensured excellent physiological maturity of these Bordeaux red grape varieties. Near drought conditions were staved off by late summer rains, which brought the season back into balance and enabled this hand-selected fruit to be picked in optimum condition.

We used the traditional methods of France's Bordeaux region in making this Claret-style wine. After gentle de-stemming and crushing, the grapes were put into stainless steel vats. During fermentation the tanks were regularly drained and the fermenting wine allowed to aerate. It was then pumped back over the *cap* of floating grape skins to keep it moist and healthy. After fermentation had finished the wine was kept in contact with the grape remnants (*marc*) in the sealed tanks to help its structure. The length of this period was determined by regular tasting of each vat and when it was felt to be at its best, the wine was drained and put into oak barriques where it remained for 2 years. During this time it underwent natural malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation and several rackings (careful separation from its yeast deposit) to aid its clarification. It was blended according to taste and bottled.

On release the wine is a deep carmine colour. The merlot grapes have given it upfront impressions of ripe, red berry fruits, such as raspberry and blackberry. It has also given a plummy, plumpness to the mid-palate. The cabernet, by contrast, has added a backbone of muscley tannins, a wild blackcurrant streak and drawn out the length. There is a zesty, dark, energy chocolate finish, which lingers after swallowing.

Wine in moderation is a natural health food