



NINTH ISLAND 2005 TAMAR

INTRODUCTION

Ninth Island, although often shrouded by ocean mists, is visible from our vineyards in northern Tasmania. The island name has been used for our range of fresh, lively early drinking style wines that capture the distinctive cool climate flavours and nature of Tasmania.

LOCATION AND ASPECT

This 65% merlot, 30% cabernet sauvignon and 5% cabernet franc blended wine is sourced from our Pipers Brook Vineyard on the west bank of the Tamar River just north of Launceston. The special local climate of the vineyard (the product of a north-facing aspect combined with the buffering quality of a large stretch of river frontage about 1 km wide), aids in giving the grapes the ripe blackcurrant flavours.

SEASON

Only the warmest grape growing areas in Tasmania, such as the Tamar Valley, are appropriate for late ripening varieties such as cabernet sauvignon and merlot where they produce the intense, blackcurrant-like fruit flavours for which these varieties are famous. The 2005 season provided perfect ripening conditions for the fruit and was characterized by almost perfect conditions for flowering and fruit set followed by a warm summer ripening season.

SOIL

The grapes were grown on vertosol (black cracking clays) from the Tamar Valley. This particular soil type has an excellent water holding capacity, offering a steady supply of moisture and nourishment to the vines throughout the growing season.

VITICULTURE

The vines are predominantly grown on Lyre trellis, which is an outward leaning system, designed to maximize the exposure of the ripening bunches to the sun. To intensify fruit flavor we employ bunch thinning prior to harvest. Hand harvested, with leaf plucking to expose the bunches to the sun.

WINEMAKING

The grapes are harvested during the last week of April and transported to the winery at Pipers Brook where they are fermented in stainless steel potter fermenters. To avoid excessive oxidation, the new wine once pressed off is then gravity racked to French oak barrels and aged in cool, underground cellars for a period of 16-18 months before bottling.

Analysis: Alcohol: 13.2% Titratable acidity: 7.1 g/L pH: 3.35

TASTING NOTES

Colour: Deep and vibrant crimson red.

Bouquet: A fine lifted berry fruit bouquet of blackberries, blueberries, dark cassis fruit and the subtle hint of prune with lingering spicy vanillin bean characters from the French oak, all balanced by the tones of tobacco leaf and cigar box complexity.

Palate: Lifted berry fruits and prune with tobacco leaf and vanillin bean notes. Subtle and elegant, the palate is lush and concentrated with English liquorice, blackcurrants, and dark chocolate all rounded by nicely balanced sweet jammy flavours of blue plum and prunes with the texture of fine dusty tannins on the finish. Overall the wine has classic cool-climate richness.

Ageing potential: Likely life span 2006 to 2012 with likely best year 2008.

Food suggestions: Osso bucco, beef Wellington, roast lamb, spicy sausages cooked with tomato and beans; braised neck of lamb; rare beef with béarnaise sauce, rabbit and other game meats.

