



## Spinyback 2007 Merlot

### Harvest

This season started off with a cold Spring with low levels of fruit set and Summer was a late starter with cool windy weather around Christmas and New Year. By February we were in Summer proper with lots of hot and sunny days, and almost no rain leading to very dry conditions in the vineyards. Autumn continued very much in this vein with a glorious Indian Summer and our first fruit was harvested in late March. Due to lower crop levels and a late but warm season, this year's fruit has excellent concentration and flavours.

Grapes for the Spinyback 2007 Merlot were sourced from vines grown on the heavy clay soils of the Moutere. This wine is not a blend: it contains only Merlot from this selected site so that this wine is a pure expression of the Merlot variety. The grapes were hand-harvested at physiological ripeness at the end of April.

### Winemaking

On arrival at the winery, the fruit was destemmed and lightly crushed to open top fermentation vats. The vats were inoculated with selected French yeast. They were vigorously hand-plunged throughout fermentation and temperatures encouraged to peak at 28-30°C for optimum tannin and colour extraction.

At the completion of fermentation, the wine underwent a period of maceration on skins, until the tannins were considered to be in balance. The wine was then pressed off its skins, and after a short settling time, it was racked off its gross yeast lees to undergo natural malolactic fermentation and oak maturation for six months in French oak barrels. During this time, it was periodically racked and returned to help integrate the tannins.

In December 2007, the wine was racked off fine lees and fined, stabilised and filtered prior to bottling in January 2008 and bottle aging prior to release.

### Technical data

Alcohol:	13.5 %
Residual sugar:	2.2g/L
pH:	3.73
Titrateable acidity:	6.45 g/L

### Tasting notes

This 100% Merlot has a distinctly spicy bouquet with wild berries, dried herbs and earthy notes with succulent fruit tannins and toasty oak flavours on the palate. The fine-grained tannins give the wine structure, while the fruit concentration gives it depth and softness. A good accompaniment to a range of red meat and game dishes, plus the perfect wine for a barbeque.