

# HILL & DALE

## DRY ROSÉ MERLOT 2020

*Winemaker:* Guy Webber

*Appellation:* Stellenbosch

*Viticulturist:* Hannes van Zyl

*Grape varietal:* Merlot

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### **Background**

The Hill&Dale label offers a range of accessibly- styled wines with a New World character for international appeal, created by award-winning winemaker, Guy Webber.

Grapes for the Hill&Dale wines are selected from vineyards within the Stellenbosch region. Extensive vineyard management programmes are in place for each of the vineyards from which the fruit is selected. All aspects of the process are strictly governed so as to comply with the standards set for the Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) system as well as the ethical trade requirements required by the WIETA accreditation system.

### **Vineyards**

The vineyards, planted between 1987 and 1993, are situated on gentle slopes facing north-east, planted at altitudes of between 160m and 230m above sea level and grown in marginal soils of decomposed granite and Table Mountain sandstone. The vines are all grafted onto nematode-resistant rootstocks and trellised on five-wire fence systems. While not yet back to normal, the annual rainfall did recover somewhat from the past six years of crippling drought but with temperatures still well above normal. This thus puts the 2020 vintage firmly with its five predecessors in being classified as warm and dry.

### **Winemaking**

After picking the grapes by hand on 13 February, at an average of 23,4° Balling, the grapes were crushed and destalked. The juice was immediately separated from the skins to prevent excessive colour extraction and, after clarification by flotation with nitrogen gas, fermentation took place in stainless-steel tanks at temperatures between 14 and 16°C. Following the completion of the alcoholic fermentation, the wine was allowed a short time on the lees before being prepared for bottling. Only a light bentonite fining was needed to ensure stability of the wine before final filtration. The first bottling commenced on 12 October 2020 with a total of 18,200 cases (6 x 750ml) being produced.

### **Winemaker's comments**

- Colour:* Crisp and bright with a subtle blush of pink rose petals and fresh wild trout.
- Bouquet:* A gush of strawberries and Turkish Delight with the faintest of touches of zest from a ruby grapefruit and nutmeg.
- Taste:* This really is the friend we all like to have. The wine is friendly, fresh and balanced with a rounded mouthfeel belying its dryness. A crowd-pleaser.

### **Food pairing**

A wonderful "all occasions" wine, enjoyed on its own or with something to eat. Great pairings would include:

- Sushi
- Watermelon salad with feta, mint and balsamic vinegar
- Vanilla panna cotta with fresh strawberries
- Bacon & egg breakfasts
- Pasta carbonara with crispy bacon

### **Chemical analysis**

- Alcohol:* 13.18% by vol
- Residual sugar:* 2.2 g/l
- Total acidity:* 5.1 g/l
- Volatile acidity:* 0.35 g/l
- pH:* 3.57
- Total extract:* 21.7 g/l
- Total SO<sub>2</sub>:* 98 ppm (at release)

