

Down to Earth Cabernet Sauvignon 2017

March 2020

Terre à Terre is proud to present its special 2017 release of Cabernet Sauvignon coming from its very unique close-spaced vineyard in Wrattenbully, South Australia. This vineyard has been baptised the Crayères Vineyard, after the chalk cellars that are found throughout Xavier's region of birth in Champagne, France. Similar natural structures are found underneath this very special vineyard, and they are now the subject of a research project led by a team from the University of Adelaide as they are full of undisturbed ancient fossilised remains.

The Crayères vineyard is located next to Tapanappa's Whalebone Vineyard, at the top of a north-south limestone ridge in Wrattenbully, one of Australia's most exciting regions. The Terra Rossa top-soil is characteristic of the area. The Cabernet Sauvignon was planted on rootstocks in 2004 using the Reynella and CW44 clones, at a relatively high density for the area (4,444 vines per hectare, similar to the density of vineyards in Saint Emilion). The fruiting wire is only 50cm above ground, which is why the local vigneron call the vines the "low vines".

The 2017 growing season was relatively cool compared to the 2016 and 2018 growing season. Ideal flowering conditions led to early fruit set. However, the 2017 vintage was a slightly warmer than average vintage. Unlike 2016 and 2018, it was a late vintage, budburst finished late October 2016, and flowering was in full bloom by mid December 2016.

On the 19th of April 2017 we handpicked our close-spaced Cabernet Sauvignon. The fruit was perfectly ripe at harvest, with amazing Cabernet Sauvignon blackberry flavours and great tannins. The must was fermented in 1 Potter fermenter with boards to keep the cap submerged (cycled only once during vintage). Fermentation was very slow (less than 1 Bé per day) and the wine was pressed off skins after 25 days of maceration and fermentation and left to settle in a tank for 8 days before being racked to French oak barrels (6% new). After 18 months in barrel, the wine was racked off in a 5 year-old *foudre*. It aged for 6 months in the *foudre*. After racking off oak, the wine was blended with 5% Cabernet Franc from Crayères Vineyard, 5% Shiraz from Padthaway and 4% very ripe Merlot from Piccadilly Valley, ready for bottling early 2020.

The 2017 release of this Cabernet Sauvignon demonstrate the potential of the Crayères single vineyard. It is a superb example of Cabernet Sauvignon from the Limestone Coast, with exemplary blackberry fruit flavours. It has the tannin structure and the fruit of a world class Cabernet Sauvignon.

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