



Cottage Block Cabernet Merlot 2006

Cottage Block is the affectionate term our winemakers bestow on special rows of vines in a vineyard that produce the most outstanding fruit. Only in the very best years will the winemaker personally select the grapes for this range, before gently crafting them into limited-edition wines of exceptional quality. These are hand-crafted wines from an exclusive range for the connoisseur who appreciates the difference.

DESCRIPTION:

Colour: Dense garnet-purple

Aromas: Attractive blackcurrant and dark, forest-berry characters

Palate: The palate is rich and warming with lingering, concentrated and sweet fruit flavours and firm, yet silky tannins supported by highly integrated savoury oak

CELLARING: This wine will reward careful cellaring for at least eight years from the vintage year.

Wine:	Cottage Block Cabernet Merlot
Vintage:	2006
Release date:	October 2008
Winemaker:	Tony Robb
Variety:	Cabernet Sauvignon (41%), Merlot (31%), Cabernet Franc (18%)
Region:	100% Hawke's Bay
Alcohol:	13.5%
pH:	3.71
Total acidity:	5.9g/l as tartaric
Brix at harvest:	22.7-23.7°Brix
Harvest notes:	Only the lowest cropping vines were selected for this wine. In 2006, Hawke's Bay experienced a very warm, dry summer, producing very intensely coloured and flavoured grapes. All fruit was carefully selected and hand-picked. The Merlot (23.7°Brix) and the Cabernet Sauvignon (23.1°Brix) come from the Gimblett Gravels, whilst the Cabernet Franc (22.7°Brix) is sourced from the Te Mata sub-regions of Hawke's Bay. Gimblett Gravels fruit is typically highly structured and yields ripe flavours at lower Brix levels when compared with the rest of Hawke's Bay, whilst fruit from the Te Mata region is typically softer and fleshier.
Fermentation notes:	The fruit was gently de-stemmed then crushed into small fermenters that were pumped over in the traditional Bordeaux fashion throughout the active phase of fermentation. Extended post-fermentation maceration was used for all components to aid tannin evolution and stabilise colour, with the Gimblett Gravels components spending up to 38 days on skins. All components underwent malolactic fermentation in barrel. One aerative racking was used immediately after malolactic fermentation in order to further aid tannin evolution.
Maturation notes:	Each individual vineyard component was aged in French oak barriques for 16 months prior to blending, 40% of which were new oak. The final blend was achieved by tasting and assessing individual barrels and selecting only those that met the Cottage Block standard and style. The wine was then bottled without any fining or filtration.



Other comments: Like any strongly structured red wine, we recommend that Cottage Block Cabernet Merlot is decanted up to 30 minutes prior to serving at a temperature of no less than 16°C.
