

Craggy Range Sophia Merlot Blend 2014

The Story

Craggy Range is a family owned winery established in 1997, and situated in the shadow of the spectacular Te Mata Peak in the premium wine growing area of Hawke's Bay New Zealand. Craggy Range produces a collection of iconic wines from grapes grown on exceptional estates in Hawke's Bay, Martinborough, and Marlborough, with an unrelenting focus on quality. From the stony, warm soils of the Gimblett Gravels in Hawke's Bay to the volcanic, clay soils of Te Muna Road in Martinborough, these exceptional vineyards produce wines with amazing aromatics, purity and complexity. The reputation of Craggy Range's portfolio is synonymous with quality and attention to detail, with the winery receiving a number of internationally recognised awards. Bob Campbell MW named Craggy Range his New Zealand Winery of the Year 2017, and the winery is the only New Zealand producer to feature in the US Wine & Spirits magazine top 100 wineries. Craggy Range Aroha and Le Sol also feature in the New Zealand Fine Wine Classification.

The Vineyard

The Gimblett Gravels Winegrowing District resulted from a flood in 1876 when the Ngaruroro River changed its course and a vista of gravel was left behind. The area is a place of warmth, stone and sandy alluvial soils. This unique combination alongside other climatic factors such as sunshine hours, humidity and rainfall means the gravels retain heat and lead to optimum ripening for Syrah, Merlot and Cabernet. The stylistic characters of red wines from the vineyard are richness, ripeness and elegance with a distinctive fine dusty tannin finish. Chardonnay is also grown on the vineyard with distinctive floral notes and pronounced minerality on the palate.

Vintage 2014

For the record, 2014 had 1544 Degree Days, with 2013 measured at 1473, the Long Term Average being 1515. The Rainfall in 2014 was 545 mm, whereas 2013 had 228 mm, the Long Term Average being 477 mm. The Hawke's Bay vignerons say that rainfall at "just the right times" alleviated any stress from the warm and dry growing conditions, with the significant rainfall occurring in the 10 days after 5 April when most of the fruit was already picked.



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Winemaking

A blend of 61% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 19% Cabernet Franc from the 'Gimblett Gravels' vineyard, hand-picked and fermented to 13.8% alc., the Merlot around 25 days on skins and the Cabernet Sauvignon approx. 35 days on skins, the wine aged 19 months in 40% new French oak barriques.

Tasting Note

Raymond Chan:

"Very dark, black-hearted purple-red colour, a little lighter on the rim. This has a full, deep and powerful nose with very intense, fresh and vibrant ripe dark plum and black berried fruit aromas entwined with layers of spicy oak. The primary nature of the fruit and the oak exuberance has yet to integrate, but the potential quality is clear. Medium-full bodied, the palate is tightly bound, but the fruit is rich, lusciously bright and vibrant in its richness and vitality. Blackcurrant, blackberry and blue fruit notes show with layers of dark herbs, earth and spicy, toasty oak with vanilla. The fruit is framed by fine-grained, flowery tannin structure and serious extraction. The fruit and grip is carried with energy and acid tension to a very long and sustained sweet, primary-fruited finish with notable concentration and grip. This is a rich and youthfully vibrant Merlot-based blend with mouthfilling flavours, serious structure and great potential. "

Alcohol Percentage	13.8%
Residual Sugar	Dry
T.A.	
Aging Potential	10 - 15 years



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