



FREEMAN VINEYARDS

Freeman Vineyards is located in the Hilltops region of New South Wales. This specialist family wine company was established in 1999 by viticulturist Dr Brian Freeman, previously Professor of Wine Science at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga.

The estate comprises several elevated vineyard blocks located within a radius of 10 kilometres on a 560-meter ridge. This high and cool location and the well-structured free-draining decomposed granite soils are ideally suited to viticulture.

From the outset Brian Freeman concentrated on northern Italian origin varieties, notably Australia's only plantings of Rondinella and Corvina that produce the trophy-winning FREEMAN Secco. Not content with just this duo, Brian Freeman also planted Nebbiolo, the illustrious grape from Piedmont.

VITICULTURE

Like its northern Italian siblings, Nebbiolo has adapted extremely well to the Hilltops terroir and continental climate. As in Piedmont, fog is frequent in the Hilltops in autumn, the Nebbiolo vines relishing this and the region's typical warm days and cool nights so integral to cultivating balance and complexity in this relative newcomer to Australian viticulture.

A block of 40-year-old dry-grown vines was grafted to Nebbiolo starting in 2008 with two clones, one an intensively flavoured lighter clone originally acquired from the CSIRO collection. An additional four clones were established in 2010 for further evaluation. In just a few seasons the portents suggest the variety is adapting well to its new home. So in 2015 a larger block of merlot vines were grafted to the favoured CSIRO clone.

The crop was reduced by removing bunches at veraison to achieve a yield of three tonnes/hectare, a pre-requisite for balance in the vines.

VINTAGE

The 2015 vintage season is acknowledged as an outstanding year in the Hilltops region creating intensely coloured and flavoured wines. A dry summer led into the cool, dry autumn providing ideal ripening conditions. Nebbiolo takes time to reach maturity even in the Australian climate, an ideal long, slow evolution that is the key to its seductive richness. The grapes were hand-harvested in early April.

TASTING NOTES

An intense magenta coloured wine marked by a distinctive varietal nose with hints of tar and leather and beguiling floral rose nuances, leading to a concentrated, savoury, medium-weight palate. The flavours are rich, with underlying fruit sweetness, balancing subtle oak and liberal fine-grained tannins.