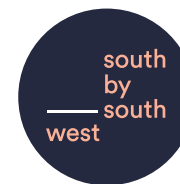


the meandering négo



## 2024 MONTEPULCIANO



After close to a decade hassling out the lovely Mark Cumbers of Vineyard 28 fame, for some Italian varietals he has in the Geographe wine region, in 2024 he finally caved and offered us a small parcel of Montepulciano (and Barbera) from the truly beautiful Wildwater Vineyard in Hoffman in the Harvey Hills. We are very humbled to have now contracted this fruit resource going forward and are very excited to be adding a Montepulciano into our portfolio of wines going forward as it really strengthens our focus on Italian varietal wines and provides some breadth within our range.

### VINTAGE & VITICULTURE

After coming off one of the more extended vintages in 2023, vintage 2024 brought us the opposite! 2024 has certainly been the earliest and quickest vintage we have been a part of. Fruit was around two to four weeks earlier than a 'classic vintage' for most varietals due to an unusually warm November and the increasing temperatures and lack of rain through the Summer. Margaret River would normally see on average 94 days being the time from flowing to harvest, however this year on top of the earlier start, the grape maturity was around 10 days less which compounded how early vintage started (and finished)!

The early start wasn't a great concern for us as it has timed in with a spectacular Marri blossom which is kept the bird pressure down. In general, harvested fruit had epic concentration with slightly higher sugar levels, but strangely so with great natural acid levels as well keeping it fresh and vibrant. Although record breaking in a number of areas, 2024 was still another great vintage, but with a slightly different story, and those vintage conditions that give us vintage variation is what we love to show in our South by South West wines.

The Wildwater Vineyard in Hoffman, sits on gravelly soils with an altitude on average of 250m above sea level. The altitude combined with the continental climate and cooling westerly Indian Ocean winds provides solid ripening hours as well as good diurnal temperature range. It's a sexy vineyard, in the middle of nowhere, and when you're standing within the rows you really get a feeling of remoteness and a real connection to the land.

The Montepulciano was hand harvested in late February to achieve the desirable ripe flavours and resolved tannins. Montepulciano is generally a bigger, richer, and bolder varietal, and we suspect that the warmer vintage characteristics suited well to its ripening period.

### WINEMAKING

The Montepulciano was hand harvested and then cooled for 24 hours prior to being destemmed with open rollers – taking berries off whole with little to no maceration allowing us to keep some whole berries in the ferment for a touch of carbonic goodness, freshness and elegance.

The fruit was fermented in an open stainless-steel fermenter with gentle plunging three times a day, as well as pump overs. The fruit was then pressed gently after 10 days on skins, settled in tank and then barrelled down to 3 year old French oak barriques for only 9 months maturation to maintain some freshness and vibrancy. The wine was coarsely filtered prior to bottling before Christmas and then matured for a further 6 months in bottle before release.

### APPEARANCE, NOSE & PALATE

In a glass the wine presents with a wonderfully deeply coloured, brooding inky core. On the palate it is generous in fruit including red plum, sour cherry, boysenberry, some darker fruits, hints of herbs and spices and a touch of earthiness. The wine has moderate acidity, a firm structure, well integrated tannins, a velvety texture and a long, satisfying finish.

As far as ageing potential goes, Montepulciano will develop greater complexity over time and we say it has a 5 to 8 year cellaring potential, but is ready to be enjoyed now

<b>Region</b>	Geographe
<b>Alcohol</b>	13.5%
<b>Drinking Best</b>	2025 - 2033