



ALEXANDRA PURPLE RED MERLOT 2013

Brand	Alexandra Purple Red Merlot
Blend	Merlot 100%
Vintage	2013
Appellation	Thracian Lowland
Soil type	Sandy loam and calcareous clay
Exposition of vineyards	North
Altitude	300 m
Planting density	5 680 vines/ha
Vine trellising system	Guyo double
Grape yield	40 hl/ha
Barrel aging	6 months
Bottle aging	1 month
Harvest date	September 10, 2013

Region, climate, soils

Southern Bulgaria is the larger producer of grapes and wine, giving more than 60% of total yield and wine production.

Oreshets village and Rakitnitsa village, in whose lands are Alexandra Estate vineyards are in the Eastern Thracian Lowland, part of the large Thracian Lowland wine region. Its territory covers the eastern part of the Rhodope Mountains, part of the Maritsa river valley, reaching the southern slopes of the Sredna Gora Mountain.

The climate is temperate continental, with a good distribution of rainfall throughout the vegetative period. The climatic conditions of the area, protected from the cold northern winds and over 3 000⁰ C yearly sunshine, conducive the obtaining of rich, dense, powerful and memorable wines. The soils in the area are extremely diverse - grey and cinnamonic, carbonate, leached black soils, including deep and shallow sandy soils.

Climate, topography and soils in the Eastern Thracian Lowland offer excellent opportunities for winemaking and vine growing.

Vinification

The grapes are picked up by hand early in the morning, manually, in boxes of approximately 12 kg and cooled in a freezer for 24 hours at a temperature of 7-10⁰ C.

After cooling, the grapes are destemmed, separated from the clusters and sorted manually on the sorting line, with the aim to eliminate all substandard grains.

From the sorting line the berries fall by gravity into stainless steel vats with a capacity of 100 hl.

The following process is a cold maceration, which lasts about 10 days. The process continues at a low temperature, with daily punch down in order to move aromas and color from the skin into the grape juice. Follows fermentation for around 10 days at an increased temperature, and through several hours is made pumpover. After fermentation the wine remained about 15 days in vessel. It is pressed gently to separate the already finished wine from the solid parts.

The wine is transferred in 225 liter French oak barrels, and part of it is moved into a new stainless steel. Begins malolactic acid fermentation, wherein the sharper malic acid is converted into a softer lactic acid. As a result of this transformation, wines become softer and more complex.

Follows maturing in French oak barrels of 225 liters for 6 months of 100% of the blend, 50% of the barrels are new, first charge and 50% are used on the third and fourth charge.

The wine was bottled on October 1, 2014.

Tasting notes