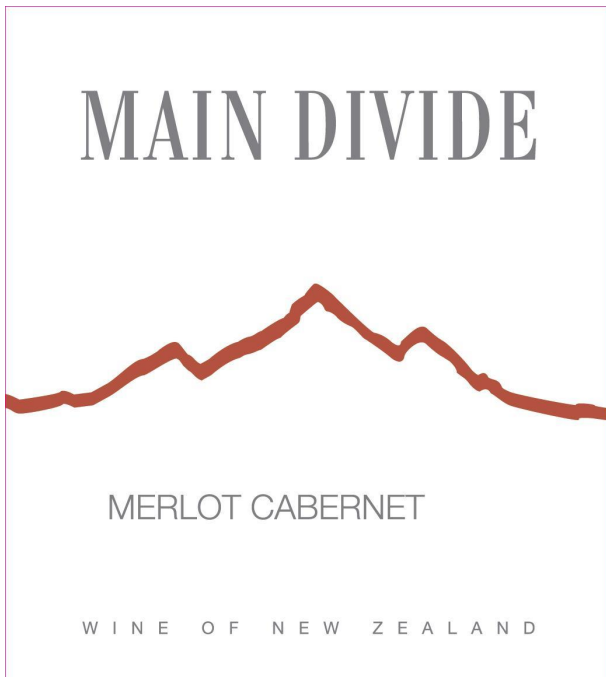


## MERLOT CABERNET 2014

### TASTING NOTE



Main Divide is the local name for the Southern Alps and is the backbone of the South Island, where grapes for Main Divide are exclusively sourced. Vineyards have been selected for their quality and ability to express unique regional flavours.



**The Season:** There was a mild spring followed by a warm summer and early autumn. Although there was some late season rain the fruit was physiologically advanced and had ripe varietal flavours with a harmonious balance sugars and acids.

**The Vineyard and the Vines:** The vines were grown in stony, freely draining soil in north/south orientated rows, permitting even light penetration on the berries. From early in the season the bunches were well exposed to the direct sunlight to ensure optimum colour and physiologically ripe flavours and tannins..

**The Harvest and Winemaking:** The methods used to make Bordeaux's classical *Claret* were employed in crafting this wine. After picking, they underwent natural or "wild" primary fermentation in vats. During this process the juice was periodically drained off the bottom of the vats and recirculated over the top of the floating *cap* of skins in order to keep them moist and healthy. When primary fermentation was finished the vats were sealed and the grape remnants were steeped in the wine, the exact period being determined by daily tasting. The wine was then gently pressed from the skins and put into French oak barriques to mature and mellow for 12 months. In the summer after harvest it underwent spontaneous secondary (*malolactic*) fermentation by the grapes' indigenous micro-organisms. During this maturation period the wine was also removed (*racked*) from its yeast deposit to enable it to clarify naturally. Selected barrels were carefully blended according to taste to produce this final wine.

**The Wine:** The bouquet and flavour suggest blackberries, purple plums, cassis, cigar box and vanilla pod. There is an initial impression of softness but the wine then expands in the mouth to become muscular with a generous spine of ripe tannins that support and draw out the lingering aftertaste.

***Wine in moderation is a natural health food***