

# PENLEY ESTATE

## 2005 GRYPHON MERLOT TASTING NOTES

**Release:** December 2006 **Area:** Coonawarra  
**Country:** Australia **Harvest Day:** 7th April 2005  
**Analysis:** Alcohol 15%, Acid 5.70g/l., pH 3.44

**Objective:** To create a complex red wine style. To enhance the reputation of Coonawarra as Australia's pre-eminent red wine growing district. The wine should show varietal character of floral, rich and ripe Merlot with a refined palate of length and balance.

**Merlot Characteristics:** Merlot typically shows bright colours with luscious fruit and velvet like smoothness on the palate. While often regarded as lightweight in style, is capable of great richness depending on district and winemaking style.

**Winemaking:** Picked at maximum flavour development, but keeping the exquisite style that is a feature of Coonawarra and Merlot's natural character. Barrel fermented using a mix of French oak producers and forests, to provide complexity, while maintaining Penley's hallmark integration. Fermentation takes 7-10 days at temperatures of 15-18°C to maintain flavour profile. Circulation through traditional "heading down" tanks (open fermenters, with submerged caps) helps maximise colour, flavour and tannin extraction, achieving delicacy of fruit characters, great richness of palate, and softness of tannins.

**The Wine:** Deep ruby red in colour with strong red-purple hues. The bouquet is rich and complex with hints of distinct floral and violet fruit, and integrated sweet French vanilla oak. Typical Coonawarra spicy berry flavours. Strong mid palate of rich red berry notes and smoky vanilla French oak, a refined silky tannin structure with a lingering finish. 2005 Merlot is a mid- to full-bodied style.

**Vintage Comment:** After a wet winter, spring was cool to mild followed by a warm and dry summer. Plenty of sunshine and very little rain.

**Penley Style:** The balance is a key in all Penley wines - balance with power and grace. This ensures that our wines will mature successfully in the bottle. Each wine will reflect this, but will also display seasonal variations and the regional influence that Coonawarra will have on the overall style. Heading down tanks, barrel fermentation, oak selection, and regular racking for clarity ensures a refined style.

**Maturation:** Soft tannins and low acidity will provide the foundation for medium-term bottle age of 1-5 years. However, maturation is quite subjective and will vary from palate to palate. Experience has shown that bottle age, even small amounts on our Merlot, shows distinct improvement in balance and flavour development. A key factor in the merlot structure and varietal nature.

**Awards:** Awards are now generally given to wines already bottled and labelled. Hence any awards are more likely in the year of sale.

🥈 Silver		2007 International Wine & Spirit Competition
🥈 Silver	Class 12	2006 Limestone Coast Wine Show
🥉 Bronze	Class 21	2007 Sydney Royal Wine Show
🥉 Bronze		2007 International Wine Challenge
🥉 Bronze	Class 48	2007 Royal Melbourne Wine Show
93 Points		Paul Ippolito October 2007
90 Points		2008 James Hallidays Wine Companion "Good length"
TOP 100		Winter Wines Peter Forrestal June 2007

**Total awards since first Gryphon release (1996 vintage):** 2005 is the first release of the Gryphon – Previous merlot Awards: 1 Trophy, 4 Gold, 3 Silver, 14 Bronze, 4 x 90+ points.