



## Rufus Stone Heathcote Shiraz (2003)

<b>Wine</b>	Rufus Stone Heathcote Shiraz
<b>Region</b>	Heathcote
<b>Range</b>	Rufus Stone
<b>Grape</b>	Shiraz
<b>Current Vintage</b>	2003



### Description

Vintage 2003 in Heathcote was yet again preceded by very dry growing conditions in the winter and spring. This cool and dry environment meant that crop levels were even lower than 2002 vintage and resulted in a small harvest of very high quality, intensely flavoured grapes. Picking began on the 25th of March and finished on the 10th of April.

### Tasting Notes

Dark reds and deep purple in colour, an indication of the intensity of this wine and a signature of Central Victorian Shiraz. The nose shows lifted spice with fruit flavours of ripe blackberries and the softer vanillin characteristics of both French and American oak barriques. Flavours on the palate are balanced showing fruit richness, savoury undertones with an elegant and complex structure. The finish is long, and tightly held together by the thread of acidity, so important to the wines of this region. This style of wine, although enjoyable now, will display the benefits of cellaring in years to come. The intense berry fruit flavours and mouth-filling appeal of this rich red wine makes it a fine accompaniment for lamb, beef and game dishes.

### Information

Picked at 15.5° Baume and then fermented in potter tanks for ten days for maximum extraction. A third of the wine was pressed off at 2.0° Baume to finish primary fermentation in barrel – this helped to achieve a seamless oak-fruit flavour integration. 20% of the wine had a further two weeks post fermentation maturation on skins to add complexity and texture to the palate structure. All of the wine then went through malolactic fermentation in 70% French and 30% American oak barriques. Because of the concentration and intensity of the fruit that year, a higher than usual percentage of new oak was used – 40% new with the balance of 60% as one and two year old barriques. After 15 months maturation in oak, the different components were blended in September and then bottled in November 2004 with a screwcap seal.