

## LENSWOOD ABBOTTS PRAYER MERLOT 2004

### *Grape Variety*

88% merlot and 12% cabernet sauvignon  
grown at Lenswood in the Adelaide Hills.

### *Background*

Stephen and Prue Henschke, fifth-generation winemakers at the family cellars at Keyneton, selected Lenswood in 1981 as a new vineyard site, just 50km from their ancient Mount Edelstone and Hill of Grace vineyards. At 550 metres, the Lenswood vineyard slopes offer not only beautiful views over the older vine country, but also higher rainfall and humidity at the right time of the year, cooler temperatures to retain natural acidity, and still enough sunshine to fully ripen the grapes. The Abbots Prayer Merlot label links together the history, religion and pioneers of this mountainous region. This property along Coldstore Road, including the vineyard, was originally known as Abbots Flat and was pioneered by T N Mitchell, the first settler. Vineyards were previously established in this area in the late 1800s.

### *Vintage Description*

The average winter rainfall this season was a welcome relief after 2003's fourth-worst drought in history. A relatively frost-free, wet warm and thundery spring followed, creating a natural 'greenhouse' effect. The vines grew vigorously, flowered and in general set a large crop. December was the hottest for 10 years, however at the start of 2004 the weather became mild and windy and the vines thrived under virtually no heat stress. At the start of February searing heat caused sunburn and significant crop losses. New records were broken with South Australia experiencing its hottest day ever.

Fortunately March returned the region to glorious sunny days and cold dewy nights, with a couple of minor rain events, allowing the fruit to ripen under near perfect conditions. The vintage was almost as late as 2002 with good yields and excellent fruit quality.

### *Wine Description*

Deep crimson in colour. Lifted aromas of sweet ripe mulberry, plum and cedar; complex with violets, fruit cake and anise. The palate is juicy, sweet and lush with good acid, layers of rolling fine-grained tannins and great length.

### *Cellaring Potential*

Excellent vintage, drink now to 2013.

### *Serving Idea*

Asian salad of seared pigeon breast.

### *Technical Data*

Harvest date:	7-14 May
Alcohol:	14%
pH:	3.59
Acid:	5.9g/l