

Master Selection,  
**Akluj Merlot 2020**  
Akluj, Mahārāshtra, India



Grape Varieties	<b>100% Merlot</b>
Winemaker	<b>Piero Masi</b>
Closure	<b>Screwcap</b>
ABV	<b>12.5%</b>
Residual Sugar	<b>3g/L</b>
Acidity	<b>5.1g/L</b>
Wine pH	<b>3.5</b>
Bottle Sizes	<b>75cl</b>

## PRODUCER

This is a joint venture between Piero Masi, a Tuscan winemaker we first came across in the mid-1980s when he worked for Paolo De Marchi at Isole e Olena, and late wine writer, producer and innovator Steven Spurrier, who founded the Wine Society of India on one of his frequent visits. They met through Kapil and Gaurav Sekhri, whose winery, Fratelli Vineyards, is based in Akluj (Mahārāshtra), on the right bank of the Nira River about 170 kilometres south of Pune.

## VINEYARDS

First planted in 2008 with cuttings imported from Europe, the winery has around 95 hectares of vineyards over three sites in Akluj. The soils are generally poor with no clay which reduces vigour, a key factor in managing disease in what is a sub-tropical climate. Yields are half what is usually achieved in India, allowing full ripening before the monsoons arrive. Altitude also plays its part with vineyards up to 650 metres above sea level resulting in cool nights, ensuring the grapes retain freshness.

## VINTAGE

The 2020 vintage saw constant rain in September, followed by a mild and dry climate for the remaining months of the growing season. These conditions promoted a slower ripening of the grapes and prolonged development of fruit characteristics. The resulting wines have sweet and elegant tannins, coupled with wonderful flavour concentration.

## VINIFICATION

The grapes were fermented at temperatures of 28-30°C in stainless steel tanks for 10-15 days with daily pumping over. The wine was then racked into two-year-old French oak barriques where it spent six months ageing before being transferred into stainless-steel tanks for the last four months prior to bottling.

## TASTING NOTES

The wine has aromas of red fruit which follow through to the palate with well-blended tannins and integrated oak. With a fruit driven mid-palate and a long savoury finish, this wine has good character.