

## 2012 MERLOT – DRY CREEK VALLEY



### HISTORY

Our first vintage of Merlot was released in 1973 and we have produced this classic Bordeaux varietal ever since. In fact, one of the more historic properties we planted was the Bullock House vineyard which produced several outstanding vintages of Reserve Merlot and single vineyard wines. Today, Merlot occupies a soft spot in our hearts. While not made in great quantities, Merlot remains an important part of our lineup of wines.

### GROWING SEASON

From early winter through harvest, growing conditions were perfect. Late winter rains came at an excellent time and before the dormant vines awoke. Through spring and budbreak, the weather cooperated and frost was of little or no concern. The summer growing season was outstanding with moderate temperatures that paved the way for a huge set in the vineyard. Harvest conditions were superb with rain staying away. Yields proved to be 20% over initial estimates and the 2012 vintage will go down as one of the finest in recent history.

### WINEMAKER COMMENTS

The 2012 vintage of Merlot speaks to the incredible growing season we experienced in the Dry Creek Valley. At first swirl, fragrant aromas of red cherry, sage and oregano fill the senses. Several more minutes reveal subtle nuances in the wine such as dried flowers, cardamom and wet stone. The palate is full of wonderful fruity complexity combining a mixture of red cherry, black cherry and red plum. The tannins are silky and smooth, with excellent structure and balance. This beautiful wine is easy to love with a lush, rounded quality that lingers on and demands another sip.

2006 Vintage

**88 Points – TOP VALUES – CALIFORNIA MERLOT \$30 OR LESS**  
*Wine Spectator Magazine*

**87 Points**  
*Wine Enthusiast Magazine*



RELEASE DATE June 2014

BLEND 80% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Malbec, 4% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot

APPELLATION Dry Creek Valley

HARVEST DATES October 12, 2012

ALCOHOL 14.5%

BRIX Average 24.6

FERMENTATION 21 days in fermenters pumped over twice daily during fermentation

PH 3.59

TA 0.66g/100mL

BARREL AGING Aged 19 months in French and Hungarian Oak; 31% new oak

SOILS Red, iron rich

VINE AGE 20+ years

YIELDS 4-6 tons per acre