



ARTESA
VINEYARDS & WINERY

2013
MERLOT

Limited Release



varietal composition: 98% MERLOT, 2% PETIT VERDOT

appellation: NAPA VALLEY

harvest: OCTOBER 2013

technical data: ALC. 14.8% BY VOL; RS: 0.08%; TA: 6.7 G/L; PH: 3.34

cooperage: AGED 20 MONTHS IN 100% FRENCH OAK (75% NEW)

production: 500 CASES

THE 2013 VINTAGE

The 2013 vintage was an ideal growing season from bud break to harvest. Total rainfall was normal and we received most of it in November and December which replenished the reservoirs, but did not provide much moisture for the vines in the spring. Because the late winter was dryer than most years, irrigation began two months earlier than usual. Bud break was two weeks earlier than 2012 and the weather during the blooming period was ideal for fruit set and berry development. During the summer, the cycle of warm days and cool nights allowed the ripening process to progress uniformly. The benefit of an early season like this one is the ability to let the crop hang longer allowing ideal flavors to develop. The consistent temperatures and warm, sunny days, promoted even ripening; harvest progressed with a steady flow of high, quality fruit being delivered to the winery daily after being hand-picked in the early morning hours.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD

This Merlot is made from two Napa Valley vineyards: (72%) from the DeLouise Vineyard in the Oak Knoll AVA and (26%) from the Foss Valley Ranch Vineyard in the Atlas Peak AVA. The Petit Verdot also comes from the same Foss Valley Ranch Vineyard on Atlas Peak. Oak Knoll is located in the southern portion of Napa Valley where relatively cooler temperatures mean grapes hang longer on the vines before reaching maturity. This additional hang time is good for flavor development, but the vineyards require attentive viticulture to ensure the fruit gets just the right amount of sunlight and water. Practices such as morning side leaf removal, which allows the morning sun to penetrate the vine but protects clusters from the harsh afternoon sun, and irrigation control, which helps maintain a healthy canopy of leaves, are crucial to getting our Merlot grapes to optimal ripeness. The Atlas Peak AVA is cool and mountain influenced with temperatures about 10–15° cooler than the valley floor in summer; however because the vineyard sits above the fog line, this condition gives us an extra two weeks of hang time and allows grapes to develop a great amount of phenolic components. The fruit has bright berry, cherry characteristics and great acidity.

WINEMAKING

The grapes for this wine were hand harvested in the early morning by hand and quickly brought to the winery in small bins. The fruit was hand-sorted, all the way down to individual berries that were promptly placed into temperature controlled fermentation tanks where they completed approximately 15 days of fermentation. The wine completed secondary fermentation and was aged for 20 months in French oak barrels (75% new). During the final blending process it was decided that a small portion of Petit Verdot would be added to lengthen and soften the tannins giving them a nice velvety texture while adding spice and complexity.

TASTING NOTES

This lovely Napa Valley Merlot demonstrates concentrated fruit aromas of cherry, raspberry and cassis. Similar flavors delight the palate followed by firm structure and complexity. The tannins add depth while the silky texture extends into a long, elegant finish.