

Tasting Notes

This ruby 2003 Mendocino Merlot is sure to please the palate with bright fruit and velvety smooth tannins on the finish. Balanced, flavorful and food-friendly, this wine is ideal for the every day dining occasion.

From the first swirl of the glass, aromas of cherry, light Italian herbs, menthol and vanilla invite a sip. Bright flavors of black cherry and fresh cranberry fill the mouth, complemented by a medium body and rounded tannins.

Technical Analysis

Varietal	99.86% Merlot 0.14% Cabernet Sauvignon
Vineyards	98% Ruddick Vineyard, Mendocino 2% Mendocino
Alcohol	13.5%
pH	3.64
TA	.55 g/100 ml
Total Cases	190



2003 Mendocino Merlot

THE VINEYARDS

The benchlands and hillsides of Mendocino, cultivated since the mid-1800's, are well known for producing rich, fruity red wines of fine balance. In the Mediterranean-like climate of the inner Mendocino valleys, vineyards cool after sunset to a greater degree than in the Napa and Sonoma Valleys. As a result, this wine region preserves a pleasing equilibrium of acid, sugar and alcohol that renders the wine balanced to the taste and suited to a long cellar life.

The Merlot fruit in this bottling comes predominantly from the Ruddick vineyard, located in Talmage in the Ukiah Valley.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were harvested by hand and underwent fermentation in closed vessels. The wine was aged for 18 months in a mix of old and new French (65%) and American (35%) oak barrels. The aging process allowed the tannins to soften and integrate without compromising the lovely fruit character and complexity in the wine.