



BELL

WINE CELLARS

6200 WASHINGTON STREET

YOUNTVILLE, CA 94599

WINERY 707-944-1673

FAX 707-944-1674

E-MAIL:INFO@BELLWINE.COM

WWW.BELLWINE.COM

Merlot 2006 Napa Valley

Vineyard

This wine is produced from Merlot grapes grown on the Spanos-Berberian and Ruhl vineyards in Yountville, Syrah from the Massa Ranch in Yountville, and Clone 6 Cabernet sauvignon from the Georges III vineyard in Rutherford. Yountville benefits from the early receding fog resulting in more sunlight and warmer daytime temperatures. These warm summer daytime temperatures and cool evenings result in grapes with bright fruit flavors and excellent natural acidity. The Clone 6 Cabernet from Rutherford has the soft, elegant tannins one expects from the area.

Vintage Notes

The 2006 growing season began with heavy rains and floods around the Napa Valley. Rainfall continued well into spring with later than usual bloom and set in June. A record heat wave in mid-July failed to damage vines as they were slightly behind in the cycle. Normal, mild weather returned in August and continued, allowing for paced ripening. Cold weather with rain in October slowed sugar accumulation while allowing extended hang time, which enhances maturity and optimal development of flavors. Overall, the season was an outstanding year and has produced wines with beautiful structure, great color, and high natural acidity.

Vinification

Merlot grapes were hand-harvested and gently crushed to minimize crushing of berries and maximize fruit character. We fermented at 85 degrees-F with a Bordeaux yeast strain, and extracted color utilizing gentle irrigation over the skins. Following fermentation the wine underwent malo-lactic fermentation and was then racked to barrel. The wine was barrel aged in a combination of French and American oak barrels for 21 months, and was blended with the Syrah and Clone 6 Cabernet just prior to bottling. The wine was not fined and received a screen filtration prior to bottling.

Tasting Notes

Our Merlot, deep garnet in color, has rich black cherry fruit aromas, with hints of eucalyptus and oak. The addition of Clone 6 Cabernet sauvignon adds structure to the wine, giving a Cabernet-like mouthfeel, while the Syrah adds sweet fruit to the finish. Soft tannins balance well with good fruit acidity and concentrated fruit flavors to yield a wine that will develop well with several years of aging. A rich, concentrated, full-bodied Merlot with a lingering finish and supple mouthfeel.

Technical Analysis

Varietal	Merlot (77%), Syrah (9%), Cabernet sauvignon (14%)
Appellation	Napa Valley
Harvest Sugar	25.5 Brix
Harvest Acid	0.44 gm/100ml
Total Acid	0.67 gm/100ml
pH	3.59
Alcohol	14.6%
Aging	21 months in oak, 15% new barrels, 85% French, 15% American
Bottle Date	December 2008
Production	774 cases

