

2007 Merlot

Our Bell Mountain Vineyard plantings are complex. The numerous small blocks of high density plantings on steep hillsides of rock and clay are a real challenge to farm and the vines have to work hard to thrive, focusing their energy into producing delicious fruit. The payback is that these low-yielding and hard-working (read: "difficult to farm") vines produce the best fruit for making the wines we love. As in previous vintages, the core of this wine comes from our oldest Merlot plantings where tiny clusters of the inky dark Jefferson clone produce wonderful fruit.

In stark contrast to the challenging 2006, vintage 2007 was dry and consistently cool. The longer season allowed more refined, longer flavors and aromas to develop in tandem with even ripening and focused fruit. The result is not your typical Merlot. This wine is intensely flavored and highly structured with tightly woven layers of dark fruits, rose petal, mocha-spice and fine, ripe tannins. Bell Mountain Vineyard appears to bear certain briar and spice laden characteristics that this wine shares. Bright acidity tempers the heady fruit flavors and structure nicely. We look forward to enjoying this Merlot over the next five years.

Profile

Appellation	Alexander Valley
Harvest	10-3 through 10-31-2007
Cooperage	100% French Oak; 88% new
Blend	99% Merlot; 1% Cabernet Franc
Alcohol	14.2%
Brix	22-25
pH	3.75
Total Acidity	5.55 g/L
Bottling	09-15-09
Production	609 cases

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