



GROVE STREET WINERY

A Generation of Sonoma County Winemaking Tradition

2006 Merlot Sonoma County

The rugged terrain of Northern Sonoma County is ideally suited for growing Bordeaux varietals. The warmer daytime inland temperatures of this mountainous region are cooled dramatically at night as the cold maritime breezes of the Pacific work their way up the Russian River Valley. The rocky soils of the mountain ridges combine with the lush soils found in the lower bench-land growing areas to provide a diverse range of flavor profiles to this Merlot. The fruit was hand picked in the early morning hours and entered the winery in a cold state where it was hand sorted prior to de-stemming. An extended cold soak of 6 days combined with twice daily punch-downs in order to achieve full extraction and a complex flavor profile. A light pressing was followed by 24 months in new and used French and American Oak prior to bottling in July 2008. Lush black fruit flavors and soft tannins are precisely balanced by bright acidity.

Source of Grapes: The 2006 vintage of Merlot is produced exclusively from multiple vineyards in the key growing regions for Bordeaux varietals within the Sonoma County growing region, including the Alexander Valley and Dry Creek Valley AVA's (American Viticultural Areas). Grape selection consists of Merlot Clones 2, 7, and 8. Vineyards range in size from 12 to 30 acres.

Grape Varieties: 100% Merlot. Vineyards are typically planted to varying combinations of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Type of Soil: Soils from the bench-land areas are alluvial sedimentary composites of sandy loam and clay. Hillside vineyard sites are a combination of alluvial with coarse sand and loam with gravel and larger rock deposits at the upper levels of the hillside vineyard sites.

Harvest: Hand harvested over a four day period from Sept. 26th through the 29th. The harvest dates for 2006 were consistent with historical picking dates of late September into early October. Fruit had gained outstanding phenolic development at ideal ripeness levels. Seeds were a dark brown and fully evolved which eliminated any green or bell pepper characteristics.

Wine making technique: The fruit entered the winery in cold state after having been hand picked in the early morning hours in order to maintain and insure varietal accuracy. Clusters were hand sorted and then de-stemmed. Whole berries were fermented in small tanks for extended cold soak of 6 days during which punch down was done by hand twice daily. Spontaneous wild yeast fermentation took place in the late stages of cold soak at which time the lots were very gently pressed in order to keep minimal the contact with solids. The wine was then moved to barrel for its secondary malolactic fermentation.

Barrel Regimen: Barrel aged for a full 24 months in French and American oak barrels. Various Bordeaux cooperages have provided barrels for this wine.

Avg. Brix at Harvest: 27.5

Alcohol: 14.5%

pH: 3.75

Bottling Date: 7/15/08