

ST. FRANCIS WINERY & VINEYARDS

2008 MERLOT *Wild Oak* SONOMA COUNTY

HARVEST September 2008

AGING 18 Months

STORAGE French Oak

BOTTLING June 2010

ALCOHOL 15.5% by volume

AGING POTENTIAL 5 to 7 years

BLEND PERCENTAGE 85% Merlot
15% Cabernet Sauvignon

VINTAGE

We never shy away from a challenge, and Mother Nature put us to the test in 2008. It was a year of extremes with frost, fluctuating temperatures and strong winds visiting us the first half of the year. Luckily, July and August brought relief, with two months of warm, dry weather. Harvest arrived early due to a heat spike in August, which pushed the fruit to full ripeness. In the end we had smaller yields, but extraordinary flavors and complexity.

WINEMAKING

The fruit for our 2008 Wild Oak Merlot comes from our Behler Vineyard in Sonoma Valley and our Lagomarsino Vineyard in Russian River Valley. Our founder Joe Martin purchased the 100-acre Behler Vineyard in 1971. With its cool mornings and warm afternoons, this Sonoma Valley vineyard is an ideal site for Merlot. For depth and complexity, we added a touch of Cabernet Sauvignon from Lagomarsino Vineyard, which benefits from an uncommonly long growing season with moderate temperatures and warm, sunny days.

All grapes are hand-picked, hand-sorted and undergo a five-day cold soak to extract optimal color and flavor. The selected lots are fermented separately in stainless steel tanks. The wine is pumped into 100% French oak barrels, where it undergoes 100% malolactic fermentation, followed by 18 months of aging.

TASTING NOTES

This classic Merlot combines aromas of blackberry liqueur, saddle leather, licorice and fresh mint with flavors of ripe cherry and dark chocolate. This is a silky, balanced wine with well integrated tannins.