



MERLOT 2002

YOUNTVILLE • NAPA VALLEY

VINTAGE

2002 was another vintage the winemakers celebrated! It was easily a winegrowers vintage - all the elements were in place to make fabulous wines. June was mild, a short heat wave in July, followed by temperatures in the mid 80's to 90's. A fairly leisurely ripening period through September allowed for excellent flavor development. The vines for this wine were carefully grown on our Yountville Crossroads Estate, and harvested at the peak of flavor in late September 2002.

WINEMAKING

Our winemaker, **Celia Welch Masyczek**, works closely with Sergio Melgoza, our vineyard manager, as they both believe that the art of making great wine begins in the vineyard. As a team they determine the picking date more by taste than analysis. The farming regimen in the Merlot block of our vineyard included extensive cluster-thinning in 2002 to reduce the vines' yield and intensify color and flavor in the berries. Additionally, the cooling breezes from the San Pablo Bay that reach Yountville on most afternoons helped the fruit to ripen evenly. The lot was harvested in September of 2002 and fermented on skins for two and a half weeks, then gently pressed and put into French Oak barrels (50% new) and aged for 19 months. The Merlot was blended with a small amount of Estate Cabernet Sauvignon which also came from the Rocca Yountville Crossroad vineyard.

TASTING NOTES

This 2002 vintage gives way to aromas of deep spice, anise and bright cherry, along with sweet tarragon, sage, pipe tobacco and toasty vanilla. On the palate, entry is very soft, with bright juicy raspberry and anise flavors, and a fruit impression that is very ripe, warm, broad and juicy. This Merlot has a full-bodied finish, soft tannins and lingering fruit flavors.



Appellation:	Yountville, Napa Valley
Estate Vineyard:	Crossroads Vineyards
Fermentation:	On skins for 2.5 weeks
Ageing:	Nineteen months in French Oak barrels, 50% new
Bottling:	May 2004; Gently filtered
Varietals:	94% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon
Alcohol:	14.5%
Release Date:	June 2005
Cases Produced:	251 cases
Suggested Retail:	\$34.00