

# ST. FRANCIS WINERY & VINEYARDS

## 2012 MERLOT SONOMA VALLEY

**STORAGE** French Oak

**AGING** 16 months in barrel

**BOTTLING** May 2014

**ALCOHOL** 14.4% by volume

**AGING POTENTIAL** 5 to 6 years

**BLEND PERCENTAGE** 100% Merlot

### VINTAGE

With ideal weather and an abundance of exceptional fruit, it's no secret the 2012 harvest was outstanding. Warm, moderate temperatures throughout the growing season allowed our fruit to reach the perfect state of ripeness without sacrificing balance and intensity. With no heat spikes, cold weather or rain, the fruit ripened evenly and developed great color and concentrations, producing wines with rich flavors and excellent structure.

### WINEMAKING

Our founder Joe Martin was the first grower to plant Merlot in Sonoma Valley. Merlot thrives in this picturesque valley where warm days are cooled by evening breezes and fog from the Pacific Ocean. The grapes in our Sonoma Valley Merlot come from our Estate Behler and Wild Oak vineyards, as well as from top growers throughout the area. Each carefully selected vineyard contributes distinctive and individual qualities to the finished wine.

The grapes are gently de-stemmed and crushed before cold soaking for three days to extract optimal color and flavor. The fruit is inoculated with many different yeast strains to build complexity and fermented in separate lots using a combination of pump overs and delestage to soften tannins. Secondary malolactic fermentation occurs in 100% French oak barrels.

### TASTING NOTES

This is what Merlot is all about: rich and luscious with layered flavors and aromas of dark chocolate, black cherry and baked plum with a touch of spice. This wine is full-bodied and silky smooth with a long, lingering finish.

