

# 2016 RESERVE MERLOT

## SONOMA VALLEY

*77% Merlot, 23% Malbec*

ALCOHOL 15.2% | BOTTLING AUGUST 2018 | CASE PRODUCTION 510  
AGING 20 MONTHS, 100% FRENCH OAK | WINEMAKER CHRIS LOUTON

### VINTAGE

Harvest in 2016 started in the middle of August during a pattern of warm sunny days cooled by foggy mornings and breezy afternoons for most of the area. The early months of the year were very mild with little rain allowing the vines to progress steadily and uneventfully. Yields throughout the region were slightly below average but moderate weather starting in early summer gave the fruit plenty of time to develop great color and flavor, resulting in beautifully balanced wines.

### VINEYARDS

The Reserve Merlot shows off the rich and flavorful fruit grown in Sonoma Valley. This picturesque valley is surrounded by the Sonoma Mountains to the west and the Mayacamas Mountains to the east, providing perfect conditions for Merlot and Malbec grapes. This area's warm summer days are cooled by evening breezes and fog from the Pacific Ocean, resulting in fruit with deep, complex flavors and aromas. For this special wine we source the fruit from our Wild Oak Estate Vineyard as well as the Dinner Vineyard high atop Sonoma Mountain.

### WINEMAKING

After hand-sorting, the grapes underwent a two-day cold soak to extract optimal color and flavor. The wine was then aged in 100% French oak barrels, 55% new, where it underwent malolactic fermentation, followed by 20 months of aging.

### TASTING NOTES

This Reserve Merlot shows off the rich flavor and balanced acidity that comes from ideal Sonoma Valley conditions. Abundant aromas of dark red fruits and French Roast coffee merge with mocha, blackberry and cherry preserve flavors, finishing smooth and slightly spicy.



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