

# FREEMARK ABBEY

Est. 1886



NAPA VALLEY

## 2012 MERLOT Napa Valley

**DIRECTOR OF WINEMAKING**— Ted Edwards

**ASSOCIATE WINEMAKER**— Brian Kosi

### VINTAGE AND WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Opaque depth of red ruby color, our merlot expresses rich dark fruit aromas composed of blackberry, black currant, blue berry and dark cherry. There is a dark chocolate nuance with integrated spicy oak. Coupled with the rich dark fruit, there is a hint of arugula adding to the complexity. The entry and finish are very smooth with integrated fruit resembling black cherry, the overall balance of fruit, body, tannin and acidity are impeccable. The velvety texture coupled with the richness of flavor provides a profile that delivers from initial sip, one that continues on the palate for a very long finish. Enjoy!

### PRIMARY VINEYARDS

**Suscol Creek**—South East Napa (33.4%) south of Coombsville, located on the south east side of Napa, this vineyard has a western facing aspect that brings in the warm afternoon sun. The soils are weaker, located amongst the oak chaparral, they are well drained promoting the concentration of cabernet flavors

**Lower Cardinale Vineyard**—Oakville (22.0%) predominantly a rich clay loam that supports healthy vineyards. The wines express flavors of dark cherry and rhubarb.

**Stage Coach Vineyard**—Atlas Peak (17.9%) Stage Coach Vineyard is located in the north east of Napa, a new region that is yielding fantastic fruit. The Merlot grapes ripen very evenly, yielding great dark cherry depth

**Keys** (14.0%) Located near the town of Angwin, at roughly 1850 ft elevation, this Howell Mtn vineyard sits adjacent to the Las Posadas State Forest, well above the marine layer, and with warm afternoon sun exposure. The summer days range from 55 to 90, with cool nights preserving the acidity. The mountainous soil is predominantly volcanic, shallow with low fertility, and producing merlot that expresses dark fruits like blackberry and dark currant, with a distinct minerality.

**Wood Ranch**—Rutherford (8.1%) In the heart of the Rutherford appellation, Wood vineyard is located east of the Napa river. The soils are very black and riparian in nature as the river has shaped much of the soil structures. Fruit from Wood Vineyard produces cherry and juniper berry flavors with a velvety softness.

### GROWING SEASON NOTES

This growing season was ideal and some would venture to say... "perfect". With textbook conditions for spring bud break, the vines continued steady growth over the spring, flowering and fruit set. Classic weather promoted a very even set of fruit that was abundant but not over cropped. The long summer days brought a normal veraison, initiating the ripening period that achieved our goals before the fall rains. Harvest was a winemaker's dream...

STATISTICS					
COMPOSITION	FERMENTATION	ALCOHOL	PH	AGING	
85.2 % Merlot, 9.7% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2.6% Petit Verdot, 1.4% Cabernet Franc, 1.1% Malbec	After a five day cold soak, the fermentation was in stainless steel fermentors at 75-86 deg for 10-28 days skin contact, averaging 21.5 days	14.5%	3.53	Barrels: French and American Cooperage: World Cooperage, 21% new Aged in Barrel: 14 months	
BOTTLING DATE		HARVEST DATES & SUGAR		ACID	CASES PRODUCED
April 2012		September 14 - November 05 for Merlot; sugar ranged from 22 to 25 with average of 24.6° brix		0.60g/100ml	15,500 cases
AGE OF VINES & SOIL TYPE		LIFE SPAN IN PROPER CELLAR			
12 - 25 years; well-drained loam formed by alluvial deposits on the valley floor. In addition, there are shallow mountain top soils that are acidic with low fertility, 8-13 years old, they are volcanic deposits on the east side and sedimentary on the west.		15+ years (Stored undisturbed horizontally in a dark, cool place. Maintained at a constant temperature of 55°F.)			