



2009 MERLOT
North Coast

BLEND

Merlot 86%

Cabernet Sauvignon 14%

VINEYARD

The plurality of the Merlot hails from Tom Farella's vineyard just east of the town of Napa along the flanks of the Vaca Mountains. The balance is from the east side of this mountain range in the Suisun Valley, from the Ledgewood Creek Vineyard. The Farella Merlot reflects cooler summer temperatures and the frequent foggy mornings of this vineyard site, being strongly influenced by San Pablo Bay. Deep color and firm tannins are its hallmarks.

The Ledgewood Creek site is a warmer, more protected location where Merlot can develop luscious flavors reminiscent of a juicy, sun warmed plum. This gracious fruit from Ledgewood and the good tannic structure from Farella form an elegant combination. Further strength and depth resulted from blending in 14% Cabernet Sauvignon.

WINEMAKING

The 2009 harvest was an extended affair for us. We were fortunate to have good warmth and sufficient time to allow our reds to remain on the vine long enough to develop mature flavors and resolved tannins. The grapes typically arrived at the winery in excess of 25 percent sugar. As a result, we had extended natural fermentations, often not complete until months later in the barrel. This wine was aged entirely in European oak for 20 months and bottled in October, 2011.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2009 Merlot is a luscious ruby red. Aromas of dried plum and blackberry with the smoky spice of toasted vanilla fill the glass. The flavor follows; warm and mouth filling, kept in balance with fine grained tannins from both fruit and barrel. This long finish reflects the subtlety and elegance of Merlot as a varietal.

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