

ARTESA

2004 MERLOT RESERVE • NAPA VALLEY



RELEASE DATE

April 2007

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

90% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon,
1% Tempranillo, 1% Petit Verdot

VINEYARDS

5 vineyards in Napa Valley. 91% of fruit from
Napa-Carneros and Napa Valley's Oak Knoll district.

HARVEST INFORMATION

October 2004

Average sugar at harvest, 25.0° Brix

TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol content, 14.6% by volume.

Average time on skins, 14 days.

1,865 cases produced

COOPERAGE

Aged for 24 months in 50% new,

50% used French oak barrels



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THE 2004 VINTAGE

The vines woke up early in 2004 and got an early start. The crop load was moderate due to the inclement spring of 2003 and the vines had good leaf growth which enabled them to survive an extended early September heat spell without concern. We were able to pick the grapes when they were ripe over an extended harvest.

ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

This Merlot comes from the cooler southern portion of Napa Valley. The cooler temperatures allow for more "hang time" which produces more intense flavors and better tannic structure. The vineyards required some careful morning side leaf removal and irrigation management to insure enough "hang time" to get even and complete berry ripening. Too few leaves on the vine do not generate enough energy for world class flavors and the berries may become sun burned; too many leaves and the berries end up shaded and not as fruity. The temperate application of irrigation water maintained a healthy canopy of leaves that survived the couple heat spells we had. Extensive field testing and tasting determined the optimal day to pick.

WINEMAKING

Following hand-harvesting, the grapes were de-stemmed only (whole berries). Fermentations were conducted in a combination of open-top vessels with a punch-down device and closed tanks with gentle cap irrigators. Several types of yeast were used for both inoculated and uninoculated fermenting. Most lots were pressed directly to barrel, and malolactic fermentations finished in barrel. After one year, the wines were racked and returned to barrel for an additional year of aging.

TASTING NOTES

Brimming with bright cherry and raspberry. Layers of cinnamon, clove, cigar box, vanilla and chocolate serve as delicious counterpoints to the pervasive berry fruit. A serious wine with excellent color and firm yet silky tannins. In the mouth a wonderfully smooth wine that has a warm comforting silky feeling from start to lingering finish. A splendid acid and soft tannin balance insure this wine will both go well with food and evolve into a greater wine over the next decade - this is a great Merlot.