



ROBERT MONDAVI
WINERY

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M E R L O T

N A P A V A L L E Y

• W I N E M A K E R ' S N O T E S •

This 2007 Merlot exhibits bold aromas of wild blueberries, red raspberries punctuated with hints of cassis and Ceylon black tea. Medium-bodied, with a velvet mid-palate, this wine's sensual flavors are supported by small additions of Malbec, Cabernet Franc, and Syrah which contribute to the fine-grain, softly structured tannins, broad mouthfeel and abiding finish.

Varietal Blend: 83% Merlot, 7% Malbec, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Syrah

• V I N T A G E •

The 2007 vintage was an excellent one for Merlot in Napa Valley. Responding to a cold, dry winter and scant spring rains (rainfall in northern California was 40% to 50% lower than average in 2007), vine vigor was minimized from the outset and the vines didn't produce too much foliage. Spring temperatures were warm, and the growing season started out fast with early bloom and fruit set. Then the weather cooled and mild temperatures prevailed throughout summer and into August. Enjoying ideal conditions of sunny days and foggy evenings, the grapes ripened slowly and evenly. We began picking Merlot on September 5 and finished on October 10. Because of the cold, dry winter, 2007 crop levels were slightly lower than usual, but thanks to the mild summer weather, quality was consistently excellent.

Grapes: (Average) 27.7° Brix with 0.78% initial acid and 3.31pH

• V I N E Y A R D S •

The primary source for our 2007 Merlot came from vineyards in the Stags Leap and Oakville appellations. Merlot vines are significantly influenced by *terroir*, evident in the array of flavors produced by the diverse soil types and mesoclimates of these regions. We like the pure fruit expression of Merlot grown in the Stags Leap District, where our Wappo Hill Vineyard is located. Oakville fruit is rich and densely flavored, and Carneros contributes vibrancy. We encourage full ripeness of the Merlot grapes by removing leaves around the clusters to open the canopy and expose the fruit. One leaf layer is left to protect the grapes against sunburn and allow just the right amount of filtered sun for development.

Grape Sourcing: 59% Stags Leap District AVA, 24% To Kalon Vineyard – Oakville AVA, 10% Oak Knoll District, and 7% Los Carneros AVA

• F E R M E N T A T I O N A N D A G I N G •

Clusters were gently hand-harvested into shallow bins to minimize crushing of the berries. After fermentation, this wine received an average of 18 days' maceration (skin contact) to soften tannins and enhance varietal complexity. Secondary in-barrel malolactic fermentation imparted roundness and depth. The wine aged 14 months in French oak barrels, of which 16% were new. Inclusion of complementary varieties in the blend enhances the wine's structure and complex flavor profile.

Wine analysis: 0.64% total acid; 3.40pH, 0.6% residual sugar, 16.0% alcohol, by volume