GUNDLACH BUNDSCHU

2002 RHINEFARM VINEYARD MERLOT

VINTAGE

The 2002 growing season began with an early budbreak and cool spring followed by a heat spike in early July which reduced yields and promoted the development of exceptional flavor concentration in the remaining fruit. A very warm, rain-free Autumn brought the unusually small crop to even ripeness.

VINEYARD

The La Paz section of our estate, planted in 1976, is a cooler site that contributes complex mineral notes to the blend. The portion sourced from the lowlands in front of the winery tends to show forward red fruit such as cherry/raspberry flavors and provides us with structure and acid.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were hand –picked and delivered to the winery in the cool morning hours where they were gently destemmed and delivered to small stainless steel fermenters. After a 3 to 5 day cold soak, the must was inoculated with prepared yeast and pumped-over throughout fermentation. Pressed as dryness, the wine aged for 17 months in 40% new French oak barrels, primarily Loreiro, Nadalie and Treuil. It was then blended and lightly filtered to bottle.

WINEMAKER TASTING NOTES

The 2002 Rhinefarm Merlot offers dusty cherry, cranberry, dried sage and sweet vanilla aromas. From the smooth entry, red berry flavors prevail as the wine broadens to show a round, creamy texture. Soft, well integrated tannins and firm acidity lead to a long, focused finish. Delicious upon release, this well structured Merlot will benefit from five years of cellaring and continue to age gracefully for 10 to 12 years.

ANALYSIS

Blend: 97% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Malbec
Cases Produced: 4,942

Harvested September, 2002
Brix: 25.7 *TA: 0.60 g/100ml* *pH: 3.50*

Bottled in May, 2004
Alcohol: 14.2% *TA: 0.58 g/100ml* *pH: 3.58*

Jeff Bundschu, Sixth Generation Vintner

Linda Trotta, Winemaker

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