

# FRANCISCAN



## 2005 MERLOT *Napa Valley*

From our earliest days, we have striven to bring out the full glory of this very noble grape. Merlot needs special attention, but it is worth it.

We begin by growing our Merlot fruit in the cooler area of Napa Valley, primarily Yountville-south. Cooler vineyards create deeper color, more vibrant flavors, and denser structure. Small lot winemaking is the rule: we keep each vineyard block separate through the winemaking process, like a collection of limited release wines. Each lot is crafted slowly, with extended cold soak and fermentation on the skins, and carefully matched to specific barrel types. Finally, over the last six months, we hone the blend to impart our signature style—rich and vibrant flavors, yet supple tannins and texture.

The 2005 growing season began early, with an unusually warm March, followed with a cool and wet spring delaying bloom until June. The summer temperatures were steady and moderate, without any of the normal heat spikes of late summer. The grapes had optimal ripening and maturity conditions, maintaining deep color and vibrant fruit character. The Merlot harvest didn't begin until late September, the latest on record.

*- Janet Myers, Winemaker*

APPEARANCE:	Deep ruby red intensity with crimson accents
AROMA:	Complex and layered with black plum and currants, vanilla, sage, and peppercorn, and sweet notes of toasty oak.
FLAVORS:	Round, full-bodied palate with vibrant dark cherry fruit, sweet herbs and silky mouthfeel. Very supple and elegant, the finely knit tannins highlight bold fruit and sweet tobacco notes, giving a velvety finish.
VARIETAL COMPOSITION:	100% Merlot
APPELLATION:	Napa Valley
ON SKINS:	26 days
TIME IN OAK:	14 months
TYPE OF OAK:	35% French oak and 65% American oak, 27% new
ALCOHOL:	13.5%