

ARTESA

2004 MERLOT • SONOMA / NAPA



RELEASE DATE

June 2007

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

75% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc, 7% Malbec,
5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Syrah, 1% Petite Verdot

VINEYARDS

40% Sonoma Valley, 26% Napa Valley, 19% Knights
Valley (Sonoma), 15% Alexander Valley (Sonoma)

HARVEST INFORMATION

October 2004

Average sugar at harvest, 24.8° Brix

TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol content, 13.9% by volume. Average time
on skins, 14 days. 7,515 cases produced

COOPERAGE

Aged for 22 months in 40% new,
60% used French and American oak barrels

SRP

\$22



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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 primarily from the cooler portions of Sonoma and Napa Valleys. 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 of 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 raspberry, cherry and boysenberry. This satin soft wine has layers of clove, anise, vanilla and milk chocolate serving as delicious counterpoints to the pervasive berry fruit. Supple mature tannins and a fruit-enlivening acid balance guarantee this wine will please for years to come.

FOOD PAIRING

Brisket, pork tenderloin, pulled pork sandwich, pasta with pesto, samosas with tamarind sauce, spinach salad with bacon.