

WINE STATISTICS

BLEND: 97% Merlot; 3% Cabernet Sauvignon

VINEYARDS: 65% Ricci Vineyard; 29% Sangiacomo El Novillero; 6% Rancho Salina

APPELLATION: Sonoma Valley

HARVEST DATES: October 18th through October 31st, 2012

SUGAR AT HARVEST: 24.4 degrees Brix average

FERMENTATION: up to 12 days in stainless steel tanks, punched down 2-4 times daily

AGING / COOPERAGE: Aged 24 months in 20% new oak barrels: French, Hungarian and American

ALCOHOL: 13.5% by volume

ACIDITY: TA = 0.65 g/100 ml; pH = 3.56

PRODUCTION: 1,543 cases (12 x 750ml)

RELEASE DATE: September 1st, 2015

WINERY RETAIL: \$30 per 750ml bottle

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

This classically structured Merlot is crafted in the Bordeaux style that Walter Schug pioneered in California while winemaster of Joseph Phelps Vineyards (1973 to 1983). The Merlot grapes were grown on the Ricci and Sangiacomo vineyards in the Carneros district of southern Sonoma Valley. This cooler microclimate provides the longer growing season necessary for Merlot to ripen slowly and develop maximum flavor, while retaining good acid balance. Added complexity comes from a small addition of Cabernet Sauvignon grown on the Rancho Salina vineyard farther north in Sonoma Valley. This Merlot has a spicy bouquet, deep color and exhibits full-bodied flavors of cherry, blackberry and spice. Try it now with grilled fish, pasta, lamb and steaks, or cellar it for 5 to 7 years.