

RIDGE 2012

MERLOT

ESTATE

MONTE BELLO VINEYARD
100% MERLOT
SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS 13.5% ALCOHOL BY VOLUME

HISTORY

Ridge first made merlot in 1974 from the Point, the highest, most exposed block on the Monte Bello vineyard at an elevation of 2600'. Originally, we wanted to see if the varietal could match the quality of, and be included in, the Monte Bello. Once satisfied that it could, we planted more merlot over the years as space and resources allowed. From 1975 on, it has been a part of the Monte Bello whenever assemblage tastings so indicated. As the younger plantings matured, it became apparent that not only did merlot complement the Monte Bello, but also had the structure and complexity to merit a separate bottling.

FIRST RIDGE ESTATE MERLOT 1974

GROWING SEASON

Rainfall: 18 inches (below average)

Bloom: Early-June

Weather: Moderate summer and fall.

VINTAGE

Harvest Dates: 11 - 15 October

Grapes: Average Brix 24.0°

Fermentation: Grapes destemmed, 100% whole berries. Natural primary and natural secondary (malolactic) fermentations. Pressed at seven days.

Barrels: 95% air dried american oak, 5% french; 18% new, 82% one year old.

Aging: Twenty-one months in barrel.

WINEMAKING

Sustainably farmed, hand harvested, estate-grown grapes; destemmed, left as whole berries; fermented on the native yeasts; full malolactic on the naturally occurring bacteria; 0.29g/L calcium carbonate added to four of seven lots; 0.9% water added to three of seven lots; oak from barrel aging; minimum effective sulfur (30 ppm initially, 85 ppm over the course of aging). Pad filtered at bottling. In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.

2012 Estate Merlot, bottled August 2014
Though winter's abrupt end left the vines short on rain, near-perfect summer weather ripened the grapes for a mid-October harvest. During primary fermentation, color and tannin developed fully. After pressing, each lot started natural malolactic in tank; a quarter of the way through, we racked to new barrels. After seventeen weeks on their lees, the wines were blind-tasted for assemblage. All showed beautifully, and were combined. Twenty-one months in barrel has softened the tannins. This delicious wine will be most enjoyable over the next six to eight years. EB (5/14)



Our Estate Vineyard is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, an appellation separating the North Coast from the Central Coast, but not a part of either.

Elevation: 1400' - 2600'

Soils: Fractured limestone sub-soils overlaid with decomposing Franciscan green stone mixed with clay/loam.

Age of Vines: 52% Fourteen years old (1998), 48% Twenty-five years old (1987).

Training: Head trained, cane pruned, on vertical trellis, vertical shoot positioned.

Yields: 2 tons per acre



RIDGE
VINEYARDS

408.867.3233

www.ridgevine.com

Exceptional single-vineyard wines since 1962.

17100 Monte Bello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014
650 Lytton Springs Road, Healdsburg, CA 95448