

RIDGE 2013

MERLOT

ESTATE

Estate Merlot Parcels: 22 tons from 9½ acres
MONTE BELLO VINEYARD SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS
100% MERLOT 13.8% 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: 20.5 inches (below average)

Bloom: Early-June

Weather: Moderate summer and fall.

VINTAGE

Harvest Dates: 9 September – 2 October

Grapes: Average Brix 24.5°

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

Barrels: 100% air dried american oak; 60% new, 40% two years 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; 0.18mg/L calcium carbonate added to two of six lots; a fining of 8 fresh, organic egg whites per barrel for the press wine; oak from barrel aging; minimum effective sulfur (30 ppm initially, 98 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.



2013 Estate Merlot, bottled August 2015
A dry, warm winter prompted unusually early budbreak; the small crop alleviated some water stress on the vines. Destemmed, the grapes fermented as whole berries, and were pressed on the seventh day. After barrel malolactics and four months on their gross lees, the six lots were racked, combined, and returned to barrel; rich texture and intense mountain fruit supported a high percentage of new oak in aging. Enjoyable now, this superb vintage will develop further complexity over the next nine to ten years. EB (5/15)



Our Estate Vineyard is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, a stand alone 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% Seventeen years old (1998), 48% Twenty-eight years old (1987).

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

Yields: 2.3 tons per acre



RIDGE
VINEYARDS

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