

# 2014 RESERVE MERLOT

## SONOMA VALLEY

*77% Merlot, 19% Malbec, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon*

ALCOHOL 15.0% | BOTTLING AUGUST 2016 | CASE PRODUCTION 550 | RETAIL \$52  
AGING 20 MONTHS, 100% FRENCH OAK | WINEMAKER CHRIS LOUTON

### VINTAGE

Warm sunny days throughout the spring and summer months set the stage for a spectacular harvest in September 2014. The lack of rain meant that harvest began a little earlier than normal and was short in length, finishing up by the end of October. The temperate days leading up to harvest produced good yields of high quality fruit with concentrated flavors, complex aromatics and excellent structure.

### VINEYARDS

The Reserve Sonoma Valley Merlot shows off the rich and flavorful fruit grown in our Certified Sustainable Estate Vineyards. Merlot grapes thrive in our Sonoma Valley Wild Oak and Behler vineyards. These vineyards are both relatively well protected from extreme weather patterns such as excessive heat and wind. This protection allows for slow and even ripening throughout the growing season resulting in fruit with great color and deep flavors. The Cabernet Sauvignon is sourced from our Lagomarsino Estate Vineyard high in the hills near Healdsburg. The hillside setting produces small, concentrated grapes that are a perfect complement to the Merlot and Malbec.

### WINEMAKING

After hand-sorting, the grapes underwent a two-day cold soak to extract optimal color and flavor. For added depth and complexity, we blended in a small amount of Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon. The selected lots are fermented separately in stainless steel tanks. The wine was then aged in 100% French oak barrels, 48% new, where it underwent malolactic fermentation, followed by 20 months of aging.

### TASTING NOTES

The Reserve Sonoma Valley Merlot is a lush wine with spicy aromas of cherry, licorice and vanilla. Flavors of blackberry and cassis emerge before a long, smooth finish.

### ACCOLADES

91 Points | *Wine Enthusiast*

93 Points | *The Tasting Panel*

90 Points | *The Wine Advocate*

Gold Medal | San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition



ST·FRANCIS  
WINERY & VINEYARDS

