

# elements

by ARTESA

## 2006 MERLOT

NAPA COUNTY 53% | SONOMA COUNTY 47%

### VINTAGE

The year began with heavy winter rains, and a late cool and wet spring, lasting until mid-June, caused a slow start to the growing season. To ensure the grapes ripened fully during the shorter than normal season, crops were thinned and leaves removed from around the fruit zone to increase exposure to the sun. Leaf removal also increased air circulation around the clusters, keeping the fruit healthy and free of rot, even after an early October rain. An additional week of ripening intensified fruit flavors.

### VINEYARDS

Grapes were harvested from 15 cooler sites within Napa and Sonoma counties. Mild temperatures created conditions for slow, even growth, which produced fuller flavors and better tannin structure. Leaf removal on the sides of the vines receiving morning sun allowed the fruit to ripen fully. Careful irrigation management fostered a healthy canopy that protected the fruit during summer heat spells. Grapes were handpicked at peak ripeness.

### WINEMAKING

The berries were gently de-stemmed and just barely split open. Fermentation occurred in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks. Full extraction of berry flavors was accomplished through a combination of punching down the cap, gentle pumpover irrigation and delestage. For approximately 15 days post primary fermentation, the wine soaked on skins to produce a fuller mouthfeel and elegant structure. The wine was then pressed directly to barrel and underwent malolactic fermentation. It aged in French oak for 24 months and was racked several times to incorporate air into the evolving wine. This Merlot is made in the traditional Bordeaux style with Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon enhancing the wine's structure, and Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, and Petite Sirah contributing aromatic complexity and flavor depth.

### TASTING NOTES

This garnet colored Merlot offers aromas of summer fruits: red currant, dark cherry and plum, along with top notes of cinnamon spice and licorice. Rich currant flavor lingers on the palate, while supple tannins create a smooth texture.



**Release Date:** February 1, 2010

**Varietal Information:** 77% Merlot, 9% Malbec, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Petite Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petite Sirah

**Appellation:** 53% Napa County & 47% Sonoma County

### Harvest Information

**Date:** October 2006

**Brix:** 25.0

**Length of fermentation:** 13 days

### Technical Data

**Alc:** 14.4%

**RS:** 0.06%

**Production:** 3,900 cases

**Cooperage:** 100% French Oak

**Age:** 24 months

**Ratio:** 25% new oak