



THE 2005 HARVEST WAS AN exceptionally long one in the Napa Valley. The growing season started with an early bud break, followed by a cool and wet spring. The summer months were mild without the usual heat spikes, and cool temperatures persisted into the first few weeks of September. As a result, the season yielded fruit with vibrant natural acidity and complex flavors and aromas.

MERLOT from our Estate Vineyard in the heart of the Stags Leap District forms the backbone of this wine. This year marks the 29th harvest of **MERLOT** at the Stags' Leap estate. Here, cooler conditions and varied soil types bring out the best in **MERLOT**. The balance of the fruit for this wine came from select vineyards located up and down the Napa Valley. All of the grapes were hand picked and kept separate throughout harvest and fermentation. Small amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc from the estate were blended into this wine before aging in French oak barrels (50 percent new) for 23 months, allowing the wine to develop a complex mid palate and expressive tannin structure.

This Napa Valley **MERLOT** begins with aromas of black cherry, brambles, cedar and fennel. The palate reveals layers of black plum, licorice and vanilla supported by firm, but fine tannins. The full-bodied mid palate carries through to a nice long finish of blackberry jam and dark chocolate.



LOCATION: STAIRWAY FROM VINEYARD TO STAGS' LEAP MANOR HOUSE

2005 MERLOT

Merlot	92%
Cabernet Sauvignon	1%
Cabernet Franc	7%
Release Date	April 2007
pH	3.68
TA	0.59
ALC.	14.5%
Bottled	July 2007