

STEELE STYMIE MERLOT 2010

VINEYARDS

The grapes used to craft the Steele Stymie Merlot are grown at the Stymie Bench Vineyard. Jed purchased this vineyard in 2005 after having sourced fruit from it since 1991. Known for quality fruit, we've named this vineyard Steele Stymie Bench Vineyard. It is located on a gravelly bench overlooking the Big Valley area of Lake County. An ideal location for growing Merlot vines.

SEASON

2010 was a very cool growing season with scattered rains throughout the year and harvest. A cool spring and summer were punctuated by late season heat spikes. The heat spikes did finally ripen the grapes, although special care had to be taken throughout the process for optimum quality. Harvest conditions were difficult although the conditions produced lighter and more focused wines, with typically higher levels of natural acid.

WINE STYLE & TASTING NOTES

Stymie Bench Vineyard typically yields a Merlot with a rich, deep red color and firm body, exhibiting aromas of chocolate, jammy fruit, tobacco and pepper. The palate reveals a rich, well-structured wine with layers of ripe red currants, anise, chocolate-covered cherries, a peppery mid-palate, and just a hint of coffee. This high-quality fruit produces an excellent, long-lasting finish and smooth tannins. It's a perfect "special occasion" wine and pairs well with big hearty foods.

FOOD PAIRINGS

This wine pairs well with wild game, Beef Wellington, strong cheeses, and rich sauces.

APPELLATION Lake County **HARVEST DATES** October 28th, 2010 **ALCOHOL** 13.9% **BRIX** Average 25.0 **FERMENTATION** Average 21 days at 88°F **pH** 3.73 **TA** .73g/100mL **BARREL AGING** 20 months in French and American oak 30% new oak **BOTTLE AGING** 10 Months **VINE AGE** Avg. 20 years **YIELDS** 3 tons per acre **RESIDUAL SUGAR** Dry **CASE PRODUCTION** 250 cases

