

STEELE MERLOT 2012



VINEYARDS

While we are not known as a Bordeaux/cabernet kind of winery, we tend to make more Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Zinfandel, our location in Lake County allows us to produce several of these varieties in styles which would make our neighbors to the south a bit jealous. This vineyard grows exceptional quality Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Our vineyard lays on a gravelly bench, which overlooks the Big Valley area of Lake County. The fruit from these vines have a great balance of flavors, structure and tannins.

WINE STYLE & TASTING NOTES

Our typical winemaking style for red wines is a warm fermentation followed by pressing and racking. The wine is aged oak barrels and spends 12 months in a combination of American and French oak. While most producers of merlot tend toward the soft and supple wine style, we have opted, because of the quality of the grapes, to make a wine in a rich, generous style. Full bodied with plum, and boysenberry fruit, a slight note of licorice with rich mocha tannins and a lingering spicy finish.

FOOD PAIRINGS

Grilled lamb chops, Bolognese, or even a big juicy burger would pair wonderfully with this Merlot.

APPELLATION Lake County **HARVEST DATES** October 6th, 2012
ALCOHOL 14.5% **BRIX** Average 24.3 **FERMENTATION** Average 21 days at 86°F **pH** 3.77 **TA** .58g/100mL **BARREL AGING** 12 months in French and American oak; 20% new oak **VINE AGE** Avg. 35 years
YIELDS 3-4 tons per acre **CASE PRODUCTION** 1,600 cases