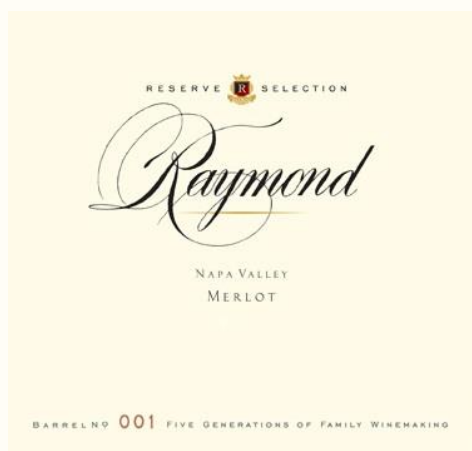




2010 RESERVE SELECTION NAPA VALLEY MERLOT



TECHNICAL NOTES

APPELLATION: NAPA VALLEY

VARIETALS: 86% MERLOT, 14%

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

ALCOHOL: 14.6% BY VOL.

PH: 3.85

TA: 6.1

FERMENTATION: 17-18 MONTHS,
15% NEW FRENCH OAK, 85% MIX OF
FRENCH AND AMERICAN OAK (ONCE AND
TWICE-USED)

IN THE VINEYARD

The grapes for the Napa Valley Merlot were sourced from our vineyards in Rutherford as well as select growers. Our estate vineyards are located on gravelly alluvial fan soils with good drainage, necessary for growing excellent quality Merlot. The vineyards are diligently monitored throughout the growing season to balance the crop size and quality. Shoot thinning and leaf removal early in the growing season followed by cluster thinning at veraison, help to achieve evenly ripened grapes with concentrated flavors.

ABOUT THE VINTAGE

2010 was a relatively cool growing season accented by unexpected heat spikes towards the end of summer that resulted in a late and shortened harvest with lower yields. Our winemaking team was excited about the quality they saw from the vineyards, and were confident that their patience would be rewarded in the end. The grapes had concentrated flavors that are proving to materialize into elegant, structured wines.

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE WINEMAKER

This Merlot spent an average of 23 days on the skins and then aged for 17-18 months in 15% new French oak, with the remainder in once and twice-used French and American oak. Tightly grained barrels yield their oak characteristics in a more deliberate fashion for a consistent, well-rounded aging process.

WINE PROFILE

The initial hint of minerality leads to rich aromas of black cherry, plum sauce, Asian spices, cloves, flint, and fresh ground black pepper. The mouth-feel of this Merlot is supple and fleshy with well integrated tannins. The palate is greeted by flavors of fresh strawberries and summer berries that lead to a long, smooth finish.