



### VINEYARDS

This smooth-running Merlot began life in California's mellow North Coast American Viticultural Area (AVA), with some of its cool berries cruising up the Pacific Coast Highway from Monterey to make the blend thoroughly coastal. A hybrid of grapes from Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake, Monterey and San Benito counties, this finely-tuned Merlot runs on bright fruit, with an undercarriage of smooth, well-built tannins.

### WINEMAKING

Traditional old-world assembly included fermentation in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks and extended maceration of the juice and skins to ensure a color and flavor-saturated chassis. Six months' aging in neutral French oak barrels burnished the veneer without making it too Woody, with the finished product rolling off the line ready to ramble.

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES BY MELISSA "THE DRIVER" BATES

"Stick your nose in the front seat of this plush ride and you smell dark blackberry and black cherry fruit, pie spices, vanilla and sweet oak toast. Start it up and you realize that this baby boasts more cylinders than the standard Merlot and is constructed for maximum comfort and enjoyment, especially with pork roasts, marinated lamb chops and lasagna."

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**VARIETAL** 80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon

**APPELLATION** California

**GROWING REGIONS** 70% North Coast  
(Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake counties)  
30% Central Coast  
(Monterey, San Benito counties)

**FERMENTATION** 100% stainless steel

**AGING** Six months in neutral French oak barrels

**ALCOHOL** 13.5%

**TOTAL ACIDITY** 0.57 g/100 ml

**PH** 3.65