

STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS

2006 NAPA VALLEY MERLOT

Our Napa Valley collection of wines are crafted with the same approach to winemaking as our limited-production estate wines, resulting in wines of supple power and elegance. In fact, fruit from our estate vineyards makes a significant contribution to our Napa Valley Merlot. Then, to complement our estate fruit's distinctive qualities of flavor and structure, we turn to independent growers whose vineyards meet our rigorous farming standards.

VINEYARDS & WINEMAKING

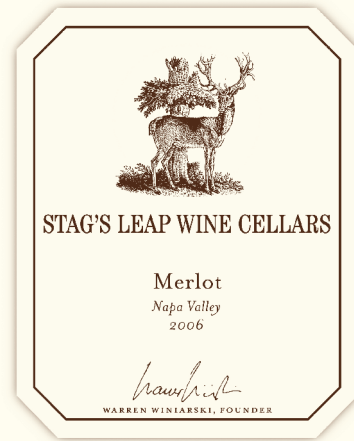
Over 55% of this blend is composed of estate fruit. We get much of this fruit from our ARCADIA VINEYARD, which contributes structure as well as a core of red berry and plum characters with elements of spice. Then we layer in fruit from B.R.V., our estate vineyard in the Oak Knoll District, providing rounder, brighter fruit notes and a tobacco leaf character. To augment the supple character of the Merlot, we added a small but important percent of Cabernet Sauvignon to build weight and intensity. Fifteen months in French oak barrels brings all the elements together for an approachable, yet refined wine.

VINTAGE

Flooding kicked off the New Year in Napa Valley, which made for great news headlines, but caused no damage to dormant vines. Cool, wet weather delayed bud break by a few weeks, but by early June, the sun came out and vines began to bloom and set fruit. In mid-July, a record-setting heat wave lasted about ten days, which helped the vines catch up to a "normal" place in the typical growing season. Seasonal and somewhat cooler weather returned in August, with a mild weather pattern continuing throughout the fall that allowed for moderately paced, deliberate ripening and a long harvest period.

WINE

This wine is wonderfully aromatic with intense fruit notes of cherry, pomegranate, plum and strawberry, laced with spicy accents of vanilla, white pepper, and cinnamon. The aromas carry over to the palate, with an additional touch of milk chocolate. Subtle tannins gently grip the palate of this gracefully structured wine. A versatile wine with holiday fare, from herb-stuffed turkey to crown roast of pork with cornbread stuffing.



HARVEST DATES: Sept. 7 – Oct. 12

ALCOHOL: 13.8%

PH: 3.57

TITRATABLE ACIDITY: 0.56g/100ml

BARREL AGING: 15 months
25% new French oak

BLEND: 90% Merlot
10% Cabernet Sauvignon
(55% estate grown)

APPELLATION: Napa Valley

RELEASE DATE: Fall 2008

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$45 per bottle

Nicki Pruss
Winemaker