

# FRANCISCAN



## 2005 MERLOT

*Napa Valley*

Franciscan's Merlot grows in the cooler half of Napa Valley, from the winery's estate in the heart of the Oakville District on south to vineyards in Carneros. These cooler vineyards give more vibrant flavors and denser structure to the wine—two qualities that are critical to growing outstanding Merlot. In the winery, each vineyard block is kept separate through the winemaking process, allowing each lot the time and care necessary to reach its full expression, like a collection of limited release wines. Finally, each small lot is carefully blended to craft Franciscan's signature style—plush, rich and vibrant, yet with supple tannins and texture.

The 2005 growing season began early, with an unusually warm March, followed with a cool and wet spring delaying bloom until June. The summer temperatures were steady and moderate, without any of the normal heat spikes of late summer. The grapes had optimal ripening and maturity conditions, maintaining deep color and vibrant fruit character. The Merlot harvest didn't begin until late September, the latest on record.

<i>Appearance:</i>	Deep ruby red intensity with crimson accents
<i>Aroma:</i>	Complex and layered with black plum and currants, vanilla, sage, and peppercorn, and sweet notes of toasty oak.
<i>Flavors:</i>	Round, full-bodied palate with vibrant dark cherry fruit, sweet herbs and silky mouthfeel. Very supple and elegant, the finely knit tannins highlight bold fruit and sweet tobacco notes, giving a velvety finish.
<i>Varietal Composition:</i>	100% Merlot
<i>Appellation:</i>	Napa Valley
<i>Maceration:</i>	26 days
<i>Time in Oak:</i>	14 months
<i>Type of Oak:</i>	35% French oak and 65% American oak, 27% new
<i>Alcohol:</i>	13.5%