



## 2011 MERLOT NAPA VALLEY

HARVESTED		October 20 - November 2, 2011
VINEYARDS		Pahlmeyer Waters Ranch, Rancho Chimiles, Stagecoach
BOTTLED		May 31, 2013
COMPOSITION		85% Merlot, 13% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Malbec
ALCOHOL		15.2%
WINEMAKER		Kale Anderson

### VINTAGE NOTES

Abundant winter rainfall, a cool spring, late bud break, surprise hail in June, and a touch of mid-harvest precipitation made for a challenging 2011 growing season. Rocky soils and sloping terrains kept our ridge-top vineyards well-drained so while yields were low, fruit was exceptionally balanced and concentrated. Intensive berry-by-berry sorting further ensured optimal quality.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

The grape clusters were hand-sorted, and once de-stemmed, the berries were sorted again by hand on the way to tank. After four to five days of pre-fermentation cold maceration in small open-top fermentors, the fruit began 100% native yeast fermentation. Two to three weeks later, the fruit was gently pressed and moved to barrel where it finished primary and secondary fermentations. The wine continued to age in 85% new French oak – a combination of Taransaud and St. Martin barrels – for eighteen months. It was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

### TASTING NOTES

Evoking a dark berry coulis brushstroke, this Merlot presents a nearly black core with a shimmering ruby edge. Aromas of ripe black plum, fresh-baked pie crust and savory soy waft gently from the glass. The palate is complex and layered, with notes of wild blackberry, sandalwood, bay leaf, cinnamon oil, brown butter and orange peel. A gorgeous mouth-feel showcases an alluring shale-like minerality and fresh acidity on a firm bed of sweet tannins. Deep and concentrated, the finish serves as a potent reminder of the wine's high-elevation Napa Valley pedigree.

### REVIEWS

#### **Antonio Galloni, *Vinous*, January 2014**

"One of the most beautiful wines of the year, the 2011 Merlot is endowed with tremendous energy... which simply proves just how great this overlooked vintage is in the right spots. Graphite, smoke, tar, licorice and plum notes meld into the finish. This is a knockout wine from Pahlmeyer." **94+ Points**