



THE VINEYARD

This 100% Merlot is a true gem! Grown exclusively on the Frankel Family Estate and farmed at just two tons per acre. These vines are some of the oldest on the property (planted in 1995) and are situated on a hillside above our Tasting Room and Sculpture Garden. The roots grow deep into the soil, measuring well over six feet into the ground. We train the vines on a vertical trellis system with wire and cross arms. From the trunk of the vine, we prune back to the permanent cordons, leaving spurs behind with two buds per spur. The site is breathtaking, from this vineyard, you can see the whole estate below. It experiences high winds that help to cool the vines during summer and fall heat spikes. The 2021 growing season was one of the most consistent we have ever seen, producing uniform berry sizes and cluster weights.

THE WINEMAKING

Our Merlot is destemmed, fermented, pressed, racked, and aged at Sculpterra Winery. In 2021 we noticed just how thick the grape skins were and saw an instant pinking of the juice right from the crusher. From grape to bottle, this product never left the estate. Only 250 cases were produced, and they will sell out fast! Our philosophy in winemaking is always to “let the grapes do the talking,” meaning we desire to bring out the flavors that are already present in the grapes. This “hands-off” approach lends itself to wines that are true to place, showing distinctive flavors that can only be found in our vineyards.

The fruit was harvested overnight on October fifteenth. We fermented the wine using my favorite yeast, ICVD-254, then pressed and settled the young wine for two days in stainless steel. The wine was aged in all large format barrels. We elected to only use once and twice-used barrels, giving the wine a hint of smokiness and toastiness. This wine is not over oaked, in fact, the fruit really shines forth in a big way!

THE FACTS

Varietal Composition: 100% Merlot
Appellation: Paso Robles
Vineyard: Frankel Family Estate
Block: Hillside
Finished Alcohol: 14.7%
Residual Sugar(G/F): 0.04 g/100ml
Total Acid: 0.68 g/100ml
pH: 3.55
Bottling Date: August 17, 2023
Release Date: December 1, 2023
Total Production: 250 Cases

THE TASTE

What a delightful and intriguing wine! A good Merlot is hard to come by, and this one is a keeper! It is very true to the varietal and shows great richness and an even texture that brings out many vivid berry flavors. It's less tannic than our Cabernet Franc or Petit Verdot, showing more like our Cabernet Sauvignon with layered textures, dark fruits, and spice notes. The wine's color is a brilliant deep opaque red and purple indicating its high natural acidity. Dominant aromas of blueberry and blackberry are followed by bouquets of lavender, violet, licorice, herb, and coffee. The finish is steady and dry, showing nice tannins and length. Start drinking this wine at the end of 2023 and enjoy it through 2027.

-Paul Frankel, Winemaker