

## 2006 Family Reserve Merlot, Oakville Estate

Velvety aromas of plum, red fruit jam, oak char and black cherry vanilla rise from the glass. There is a prevailing heart and core in this wine. The palate delivers voluptuous, textured layers of sweet black cherry and ripe blue fruit that evolves while in the mouth and stretches deep into the back palate. The tannins and acidity are firm but gentle with little attack but have quite a crescendo while remaining carefully in balance. This wine will continue to improve with proper cellaring for 2 to 3 years and drink well into 2020 or longer.



### In The Vineyard

Harvest took place very late on October 30<sup>th</sup> at 28 brix. This length of maturity on the vine is hardly if ever heard of in the Napa Valley given the nature of this mid season varietal. It is certainly the longest hang time of any of our past vintages. The '06 vintage was a bit of a challenge with often early October rains and careful thinning of damaged clusters was imperative to sustaining quality. Yields in 2006 were about average to just below average. Now in their 10<sup>th</sup> year, we continue to dry farm these vines by not allowing them any applied summer irrigation. Their roots must find water on their own and struggle in the final months of summer and early fall leading to a complexity and depth of flavor often unequaled in irrigated vineyards.

### In The Cellar

The fruit was destemmed into small stainless steel fermentors and time on skins lasted 20 days. The fruit was then lightly pressed, keeping free run and press fractions separate and aged in 50% new, tight grain French Oak barrels for 22 months. While we do add yeast to finish primary fermentation, we allow the indigenous malolactic bacteria of our cave to complete the secondary fermentation. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

### Bottling Data

100% Merlot, Oakville Estate Vineyard

15.4% Alcohol, 0.70 g/100mL Titratable Acidity, 3.45 pH.

Bottled on August 15th

125 Cases Produced

Suggested Retail—\$48 per bottle