



HARVEST DATES: Sept. 27 – Oct. 19, 2006.

BLEND: 76% Napa Valley Merlot and 24% Cabernet Sauvignon from estate-grown vineyards.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES: Grapes were harvested at an average 25.5° Brix, fermented in stainless steel tanks, then aged 18 months in a combination of new French oak barrels (40%) and one- to two-year-old French oak (60%), before being blended and bottled in June, 2008.

The 2006 Merlot is layered with aromas and flavors of blackberry, red plum, tobacco, anise and cedar, which lead the way to a delicate tannin structure and velvety finish.

VINTAGE NOTES: The cool, late-ripening growing season of 2006 finished persuasively with near-perfect maturity levels reminiscent of the exceptional '91 harvest. This came as a huge relief because September was one of the coolest on record. Unlike '91 -- where ripening was delayed by a large crop only to be rescued by hot, dry, windy weather during October -- 2006 carried a surprisingly modest crop. So it was with great relief that we received warm, dry, windy conditions at the end of October, bringing the fruit to desired maturity levels.

The long growing season provided higher acid content, thicker skins (with potentially more flavor) and exceptional color and tannin. At this stage the newly fashioned wines exhibit great potential.

