

SWANSON

VINEYARDS

2008 MERLOT

VINTAGE:

2008 in Napa Valley was a low-yielding vintage in terms of pounds of fruit per vine.

It should come as no surprise then that the wines show focus and very good concentration. Spring was exceptionally dry and cold with 24 days of frost, one of the first steps on the path to a small crop. Summer was cool with a few heat spikes in August. Harvest for Merlot came in a rush, taking place during a short 3-week period from September 8th to September 30th. Ripeness in both flavors and tannins was very even and acid balance was superb.

VINEYARD:

Merlot: Entirely from Oakville vineyards owned or controlled by Swanson. 50% from our mid-valley Oakville Cross Road Estate, 50% from two small vineyards near the flank of the Mayacamas range in Oakville. Contributes flesh and velvety texture to the blend.

Cabernet Sauvignon: Exclusively from a small vineyard estate in the center of the Rutherford appellation. Provides a core of ripe tannin for structure.

Petit Verdot: A very small block in the Oak Knoll district just south of Yountville on the valley's eastern edge. Low-yielding vines provide fruit with excellent acidity, color and spice.

WINEMAKER NOTES:

The 2008 Swanson Oakville Merlot is a charming wine, reminiscent more of the Right Bank of Bordeaux than Napa Valley. The nose offers black cherry, plum, and dried red cherry with notes of well-integrated sweet oak and mocha. Firm, ripe tannins characteristic of our Oakville Estate vineyard fill out the palate nicely. In the mouth, look for raspberry, black cherry, and red licorice. A graceful top note of verve and spice is contributed by the Petit Verdot. Velvet-smooth and long on the finish. Should continue to improve in the bottle with optimum drinkability continuing through 2017.

COMPOSITION:

Merlot 90%, Cabernet Sauvignon 8%, Petit Verdot 2%

BARREL REGIME:

20 months in barrels: 50% American, 50% French oak barrels (30% new)

HARVEST DATES:

September 8th - September 30th (Merlot)
October 10th (Cabernet Sauvignon)
October 1st (Petit Verdot)
Brix at harvest: 24.8° average

BOTTLING FACTS:

7,663 cases bottled April 2011

VINIFICATION:

Cold Soak, extended maceration

