

SWANSON

VINEYARDS

2011 NAPA VALLEY MERLOT

Merlot has remained at the core Swanson Vineyards' identity since Clarke Swanson purchased the estate vineyard in 1985. The clay-loam soil in the 75-acre Oakville vineyard and close relationships with several of Napa's best growers are the most vital factors in our quest to make Napa Valley's premier Merlot.

GROWING SEASON:

There is no question that 2011 was a challenging vintage in Napa Valley. The only true path to success was to maneuver between rains that arrived both early and late in the season. Our well-drained soils were a huge asset in 2011, but it was the decision to rigorously limit yield per vine and remove leaves to maintain open canopies that allowed the fruit to ripen even under cool and damp conditions.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES:

Hand-harvested grapes were sorted to stainless steel tanks for cold soaking and fermentation. After 18 days of maceration on the skins, the wine was drained warm directly to barrels.

The 2011 Swanson Napa Valley Merlot presents immediate appeal, showing a vibrant garnet color and robust aromas of freshly-crushed red and black cherries. Notes of sweet blackberry, coffee and allspice add further complexity. In the mouth, the wine exhibits ample black and red fruits, medium body through 2022.

- Chris Phelps, Winemaker



HARVEST DATE:

September 30th

VINEYARDS:

Merlot - Swanson Estate (Oakville)
Taddei (Oakville)
Cabernet Sauvignon - McClatchy
Vineyard (Howell Mountain)
Skellenger (Oakville)
Swanson Estate (Oakville)
Petit Verdot - La Monica (Oak Knoll)

AGING:

20 months in 223-liter oak barrels
50% French, 50% American, 30% new

BOTTLING DATE:

April, 2013 -- 8,330 cases