

RAY'S STATION

— M E N D O C I N O —

2013 Mendocino Merlot

Growing Season

As I winemaker I dream of that perfect vintage, one in which all the parts come together to make absolutely wonderful wines effortlessly. An easy vintage. A fun vintage. One for the ages. That's what I dream about. And guess what... sometime dreams come true! 2013 was another splendid year for wine. Our growing season began early and temperatures were moderate throughout the summer. In Mendocino we experienced our typical big diurnal shifts, seeing temperatures in the 90s during the days and down into the 40s by night. That allows for great ripening while still being able to retain acidity. As the season progressed, and this wonderful weather persisted, I began to hope and pray that it would last through harvest. Please no extreme heat waves! Please no horrendous rains!

In baseball, as a pitcher progresses through and closes in on a "perfect game," the pitcher becomes tenser pitch by pitch. The crowds start crossing their fingers. The guys in the dugout try to act as if nothing special is happening but you can see them beginning to sense something special just might happen. The announcers say nothing. There is an unspoken rule that you do not mention the fact that a perfect game might be in the offing. Heaven forbid you should jinx the game!

That's the way I felt in August, then in September, then in October of 2013. Inside I was screaming "Please no rain! Please no heat waves!" Outwardly just simple comments like "Fruit's lookin' pretty good this year." Heaven forbid I should jinx the season! As it turns out, we pitched the perfect season and everyone is still celebrating to this day! Perfect weather, literally perfect weather, all season led to a bounty of terrific fruit, that winemaker's dream. Balanced wines rich in color, rich in flavors and depth of flavors, with soft, silky tannins resulted. Everything you expect in a great wine is there in those of the 2013 vintage. Enjoy the vintage now and enjoy it as these wines age gracefully for decades to come.

Tasting Notes

This Merlot captures the essence of Mendocino ... strong, vibrant, cutting edge. .. all while never losing focus of its reason for being. Packed with scents and flavors reminiscent of the finest, ripest black cherries, and with just a touch of French oak inducing hints of spice, big, bold, supple tannins offer strength and concentration to the wine. Rich and fat, the wild cherry flavors linger long and seductively on the palate. Those of you patient enough to age this wine will be handsomely rewarded over the coming years. Pair this wine with your favorite roast duck and barbequed lamb chop recipes over a roaring camp fire. Enjoy today and over the next five years.

Alcohol: 14.5%

pH: 3.64

TA: .547

Blend: 80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon

