

# EMMOLO

## 2009 MERLOT, NAPA VALLEY

*"A rich example of Merlot with Pomerol-like characteristics. Our 2009 is highlighted by layers of ripe berries, earthy notes and hints of smoke and truffle on the finish. It's bold, yet balanced."* Cheryl Emmolo



### **Vineyard Notes:**

Our South 40 Ranch was the primary fruit source for the 2009 vintage. This vineyard is situated along the Silverado Trail in the Oak Knoll District of Napa Valley. We also selected a small percentage of Merlot grapes from Stag's Leap. It's the family consensus that both vineyards are well suited for the varietal needs of Merlot. The vineyards receive moderate to cool temperatures and the influence of the San Pablo Bay marine air in the mornings and afternoons. The combination of growing conditions between these sites yields wines that are better balanced without excessive blending. Oak Knoll and Stags Leap's sandy loam and clay sediments from the Napa River, along with the volcanic soil deposits from the Vaca Mountains are ideal and allow the grapes to mature with full intense flavors. These vineyards are known to produce wines of true varietal character.

Mother Nature worked a miracle for us in 2009. The growing season was marked by moderate rainfall in the late Spring followed by mild temperatures. The perfect scenario for Merlot. Canopy's were lighter than normal allowing for the desired sun exposure and our Summer gave the grapes extended hang-time. The clusters were light and the berries small with phenomenal color. We hand picked the Merlot in various phases between September 19 and October 5.

### **Cellar Notes:**

We tended to the wine on a lot by lot basis to broaden the scope of complexity. To achieve optimal concentration of color and flavor, the temperatures were controlled during fermentation in two distinctive stages (allowing temperatures up to 90 degrees F in the first few days to encourage high extraction, then dropped temperatures to 75 degrees F as fermentation finished.) This method also allowed us to maintain refined and well-integrated fruit tannins. The wine then cooled to 65 degrees F for a 30-day period of gentle extended maceration on the skins. Malolactic fermentation was completed in custom French oak barrels. The wine underwent fourteen months of barrel aging marrying the rich fruit flavors with the notes of light smoke and toasted spices.