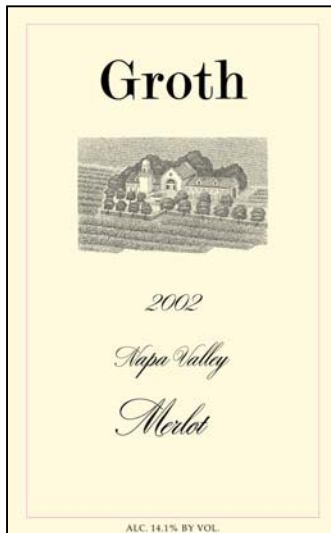




2002 Merlot Napa Valley



Vintage: The 2002 harvest was characterized by a diversity of temperatures and yields that resulted in red wines of fabulous color and concentration. A mild growing season with occasional heat spikes brought the grapes into the winery with exceptional development and character. The Fall heat spikes caused a certain amount of “harvest compression” allowing us to harvest the physiologically mature red grapes in a relatively short period.

Harvest: Merlot is grown on both of our Estate vineyards. At our Hillview Vineyard, south of Yountville, 10 acres were planted in 1974. Located mid-valley at the base of the western hills, this vineyard is well protected from the frost and wind that can be found in other regions of the valley. At our Oakville vineyards we have an additional 24 acres of Merlot, which came into full production with the 1997 harvest.

Winemaking: Fermentation was carried out over a seven-day period in small, temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks at an average temperature of 80 F. After pressing and settling, the wine was transferred to small French oak barrels (50% new) for aging. The sweet vanilla character derived from 18 months in the barrels blends well with the dark stone fruit flavors and aromas of the wine.

Winemaker Tasting notes: The 2002 Merlot has bright cherry and cassis aromas. The supple, lush mouth-feel of this wine is complemented by allspice and subtle, oaky notes. As with all Groth Merlots, it is not a shy wine but has the power and elegance that we have come to expect from this varietal grown in our vineyards. Enjoy now and age it for 5-10 years.

Menu suggestion: Grill anything and enjoy! This is the last commercially available vintage. In the future, all Groth’s Merlot fruit will be blended with the Cabernet Sauvignon and Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon. “Drink with friends, or a straw, or both.” Suzanne Groth

Key Points

- Napa Valley
- 97% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon
- Estate vineyard fruit - 62% Oakville, 38% Yountville
- Aged in French oak barrels for 18 months, 50% new oak
- Full, rich, robust style Merlot