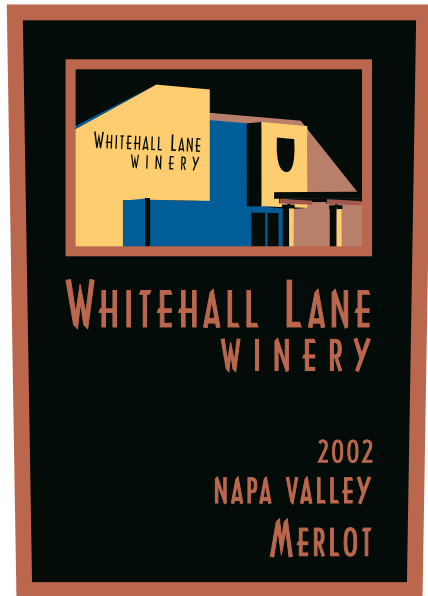


WHITEHALL LANE WINERY

2002 MERLOT

NAPA VALLEY



From **Quarterly Review of Wines**
Summer 2005:

Best of the Best
FIVE STAR WINE



"Evocative plum and peach-skin nose; lush, round, velvety, black fruit and milk chocolate flavors."

From **Wine Spectator Insider**, *May 4, 2005:*

90 POINTS

"Impressive Merlot, with a dark, rich, concentrated core of flavors, dominated by earthy currant, blackberry, cedar, and anise. Tight and focused with a complex finish. Drink now through 2010."

Blend: 88% Merlot, 7% Syrah, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon

Production: 10,480 cases produced

The Vintage: The 2002 growing season was somewhat typical in Napa Valley with excellent weather from Spring to Fall. The Merlot clusters had smaller berries than usual resulting in intensely flavored grapes. There was a heat spike in September that stressed the vines and further concentrated the flavors in the berries. At harvest the grapes displayed wonderful fruit flavors and soft tannins.

Winemaking: The Merlot grapes that make up this blend were all harvested by hand during the last three weeks of September 2002. The grapes were grown primarily in the winery's Estate Vineyard and Leonardini Vineyard. The fruit was fermented at an average of 86°F with systematic pump-overs for excellent flavor and color extraction. The wine was aged in a combination of American and French oak barrels for 18 months. Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon were added to the blend to add weight in the mid-palate and increase the complexity and length on the finish.

Tasting Notes: This full-bodied, harmonious Merlot has rich aromas of blackberry, plum and toasty oak. The wine is youthfully bright, delivering flavors of ripe blackberry, blueberry and spice. It is pleasantly balanced with good weight in the mid-palate and a velvety, lingering finish. Enjoyable now with aging potential to 2010.

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