



THE
STEVEN KENT
WINERY

2006 Merlot

GHIELMETTI VINEYARD • LIVERMORE VALLEY

The 2006 Merlot, Ghielmetti Vineyard is both the second Merlot release made exclusively for members of the Future Release Program and the first to come exclusively from the Ghielmetti Vineyard. Being from a warmer climate than the 2005 release, one notices immediately an emphasis on rounder fruit and less overt earth notes. Along with the bright cherry aromas that dominate the young wine, there are more exotic notes of blueberry, warm wood, and a dusty quality that highlights the bright fruit. In the mouth, fruit dominates, and structurally, the silky mid-palate gives way to a finish with substantial tannin and length.

This Merlot is a blend of 90% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot, and 2% Cabernet Franc. Each of these grapes contributes some wonderful to the wine: from the overt, upfront cherry, to the unusual blueberry note of Cab Franc to the integrated finishing tannin that is a contribution of both the Merlot and Petit Verdot. The 2006 Merlot is young and somewhat tight now. Give the wine another couple of years of bottle age and its inherent complexity will be on full display. With proper storage, this wine should age effortlessly for the next 5-7 years.

Only 215 cases of this wine were produced exclusively for members of the Future Release Program.

FUTURE RELEASE PROGRAM HISTORY

The Future Release Program was begun in 2003 with the intention of focusing predominantly on Bordeaux varietals. While the emphasis of the Collector's Circle wines is on fruit and short to medium-term drinkability, the Future Release Program wines are suited more to extended aging and pairing with bigger dishes. Now that our estate vineyard is producing Malbec (one of five classic Bordeaux varietals) our vision of a Bordeaux varietal wine club has come completely into fruition. The 2006 Merlot is our second vintage of that grape.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date: October 22, 2006

Fruit: Perfectly ripe and clean fruit, some of the best of the vintage, arrived at the winery with brix levels of just over 25°. A blend of 90% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc. Alcohol 14.8%.

Fermentation: After destemming and crushing each lot of fruit was fermented separately in 1.5 ton, open-topped fermenters. Fermentation and maceration lasted about two weeks. Malo-lactic fermentation was induced in barrel.

Aging: Aged in 60% French oak, 30% American oak, and 10% Hungarian. 60% new, 40% second use and neutral wood.

Time in Barrel: 18 months

VINEYARD

Location: Ghielmetti Vineyard located in the eastern end of the Livermore Valley, 3.2 miles east of the Winery; n37° 39' 40.2" Latitude and w121° 39' 48.5" Longitude, 899 feet above sea level.

Soil: The Ghielmetti Vineyard is comprised of six distinct soil types ranging from mostly clay to mostly loamy gravel.

Training: All blocks on the site use the Vertical Shoot Position (VSP) trellising method.