

Field Stone

2006

Merlot

Alexander Valley

Field Stone Estate Vineyard

The Story Behind Our Merlot

The grapes for our Merlot come from our long planned and newly planted Tchelistcheff vineyard block which graces the north side of our winery entrance. We named this vineyard in honor of our long-time consultant and friend, André Tchelistcheff, who, in the mid-1980s, facilitated a unique joint-venture possibility between famed Château Ausone and ourselves. Château Ausone is one of the twelve Premiers Grands Crus in the St-Emilion region of Bordeaux where Merlot is the primary red instead of Cabernet Sauvignon. Through Ausone's important soil analyses of our property, we both were convinced that a major planting of Merlot in this location showed great promise. Changes in Ausone's family ownership brought their joint-venture explorations to an end, but we had confirmation of our belief that Merlot would find a perfect Alexander Valley home here at Field Stone. We initiated our close-spaced planting in the mid-nineties, utilizing two recommended French clonal sources along with a superb California source. We used low vigor rootstock to insure a controlled low crop for the highest possible wine quality. Our 2006 release represents the fruition of our long-anticipated plans.

The Wine

Our 2006 release (an exceptional vintage for all of our reds) is a deeply extracted, full-bodied Merlot with an abundant, fruit forward style. The expressive aromas of ripe Bing cherries and plums, dark cassis, and sweet oak vanillins, jump early from the glass and carry through impressively on the palate. Like its Cabernet sibling, the fine, supple tannins of this full-bodied wine allow this delightful Merlot, to be enjoyed now and, with patient cellaring, continue to evolve in complexity and character over the next five to ten years.

Harvest & Cellar Notes

Harvest Date: September 29 & October 1, 2006

Average Sugar at Harvest: 26.1 Brix

Barrel Ageing: 20 months in French & American Oak

Average Acid at Bottling: 6.82 gm/liter

Average pH at Bottling: 3.42

Alcohol: 13.5% by volume

Cases Produced: 1,200

