



EMMOLO
NAPA VALLEY

2008 MERLOT

“Remarkable ripe blueberries and juicy boysenberries on the front of the palate with hints of sweet mocha, baking spices and earthy notes on the finish. A vintage of great depth and finesse.” Cheryl Emmolo

Vineyard Notes: Our South 40 Ranch was the main fruit source for the 2008 vintage. This vineyard is situated along the Silverado Trail near the Southern tip of the Stags Leap District in Napa Valley. We also selected a small percentage of Merlot grapes from two distinct vineyards in Carneros and Atlas Peak. It’s our families consensus that the cooler regions of Napa Valley are well suited for the varietal needs of Merlot. Both vineyards are positioned above the coastal fog layer and receive ideal sun exposure and cool afternoon breezes. The combination of growing conditions between these three vineyards yields wines that are better balanced without excessive blending. Stags Leap’s sandy loam and clay sediments from the Napa River, along with the volcanic soil deposits from the Vaca Mountains, play out in the wine. The unique soil composition of Carneros and Atlas Peak are also evident in our 2008 vintage. Carneros, with it’s clay-shale qualities and Atlas Peak, with volcanic origin, are well drained and known to produce bold inky wines of true varietal character.

Harvest Notes: The 2008 growing season brought us a scarce amount of winter rain and the horrid frost of April. We welcomed the mild temperatures that followed and the warm Indian Summer that allowed the grapes extended hang-time. Our clusters were light and the berries small with intense color. We hand picked the Merlot in various phases between September 17 and October 2.

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 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 notes of light smoke and toasted spices.