



Judd's Hill 1999 Merlot – Napa Valley

The Vintage – The weather patterns during this vintage were a bit cooler than normal in Napa with the exception of a few temperature spikes in mid-April, mid-July and at the end of September. The moderate temperatures ripened the grapes at a leisurely pace. The result was that all of our fruit came in 2 – 4 weeks later than is generally expected.

These few extra weeks allowed the fruit time to ripen fully, with excellent acid levels, perfect sugars and flavors. The wines of this vintage in general have more intense character and depth of flavor than usual while remaining exceptionally well balanced.

The Wine – This year, the grapes from both the Summers Ranch and Juliana Vineyard, (properties that the Finkelsteins have produced wine from for as much as 20 years), were some of the best they had ever seen. Tasting either of these two vineyard designate merlots will bear this out. They both show intense varietal character while expressing the vineyards they come from with an attitude that is undeniable. With such great components at their disposal, they took the step of blending the two together in trials to see what would result. What was discovered was a wine that shows the beauty of both vineyards while maintaining an appeal all its own. The broad shouldered spicy intensity of Juliana Vineyard fruit is moderated by the lush cherry that is typical of Summers Ranch. The resulting Merlot offers outstanding balance and richness on the palate with excellent depth and an elegance that lingers long and full on the palette. As Bonnie Finelstein would say: "It's just yummy".

Production 1,251 cases

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