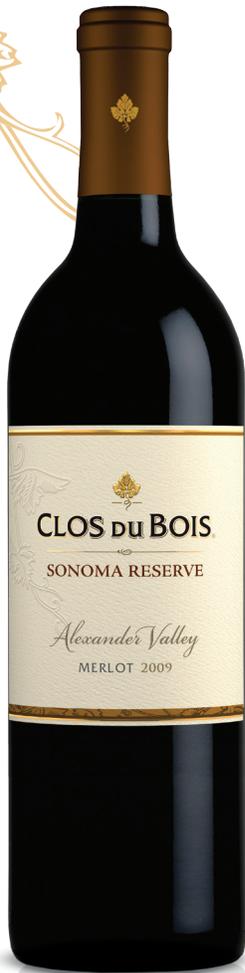


  
**CLOS du BOIS**  
SONOMA RESERVE



## SONOMA RESERVE

### Alexander Valley 2009 MERLOT

*Clos du Bois Sonoma Reserve Series wines are barrel-selected cuvées that represent a small, rigorously limited share of the winery's production of a given variety. Winemaker Gary Sitton seeks out exceptional vineyards throughout Sonoma County, then individually selects the finest barrels to produce wines that stand as testaments to the region's unique terroirs. From the cool, fog-bound environs of the Russian River Valley and Sonoma Coast, to the volcanic hillsides of Alexander Valley and the sun-baked slopes of Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County's diverse soils and microclimates find their true expression in these handcrafted wines.*

#### GRAPE SOURCE

The fruit used to craft this mouthwatering Merlot comes from premium vineyard sites in Sonoma County's Alexander Valley and Dry Creek Valley. To add richness and structure to the blend, winemaker Gary Sitton blended in a small amount of Cabernet Sauvignon (5%) and Petit Verdot (3%). The grapes were harvested between September 23 and October 17, 2009, at an average of 25.5° Brix.

#### VINTAGE

Moderate temperatures throughout the spring and summer made 2009 a very good growing season. Weather during set was good and rain in early May helped to develop a lush, healthy canopy that was beneficial in ripening the crop. There were no extended heat spikes over 100°F during the key ripening period between July and September, which allowed the vines to mature fruit continuously. The lack of extreme temperatures resulted in higher acidity and aromatic concentration in the white grapes and higher color and tannin development in the reds.

#### WINEMAKING

Grapes were destemmed, but not crushed, to stainless steel fermenters and the juice pumped over the skins three times per day for eight days until dry. Lots were then pressed off to barrels to undergo malolactic fermentation. At the end of malolactic fermentation, individual barrel lots were racked off lees. The barrels were washed with water and then the wine was returned to barrels for further aging. In June 2011, individual lots were racked, blended, and returned to barrel. This wine aged for 27 months total in a mix of French, American, and Eastern European oak barrels (46% new). The wine was then racked out of barrels in March 2012 for bottling.

#### WINEMAKER NOTES

This lush, velvety Merlot has a deep, inky, ruby-red color with heady aromas of cedar, tobacco, blackberry, and baking spices. Concentrated flavors of dark chocolate, espresso, mocha, black cherry, and blackberry are followed by a toasty oak finish. The wine is round and full-bodied with silky tannins.

#### FOOD PAIRINGS

This full-bodied Merlot is a perfect match for meaty dishes made of beef or lamb, or more subtle food pairings built around earthy flavors, such as mushrooms and herbs.

Winemaker:	Gary Sitton
Varietal Composition:	92% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot
Appellation:	Alexander Valley
Acid/pH:	5.87g/L / 3.54
Residual Sugar:	0.4g/L
Alcohol:	14.5%
Aging:	French, American, and Eastern European Oak (46% new)
Suggested Retail:	\$20