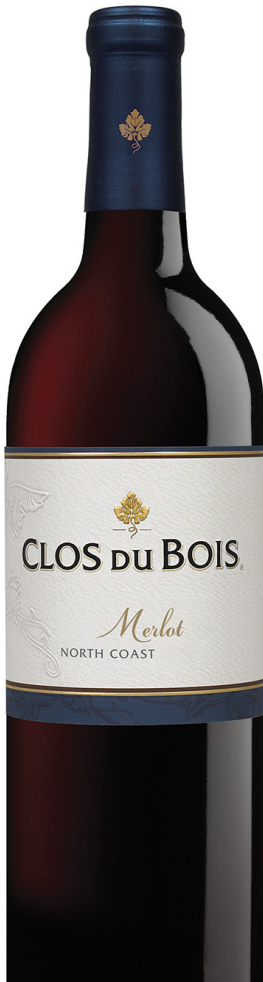




Merlot

NORTH COAST 2010



WINEMAKER: Gary Sitton

VARIETAL COMPOSITION: 94% Merlot,
2% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Petit Verdot,

1% Malbec, 1% Other Reds

APPELLATION: North Coast

ACID/pH: 5.75g/L / 3.75

RESIDUAL SUGAR: Dry

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

AGING: French, American, and
Eastern European Oak (49% new)

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$16

CLOS DU BOIS CLASSICS

Clos du Bois Classics wines are consumer favorites that reflect the winery's accessible and refined winemaking style. Working with a family of trusted growers and more than 500 acres of estate vineyards in the heart of Sonoma County, we craft each vintage to achieve balance, intensity, and true varietal character. Lush fruit flavors and a juicy, supple palate are the hallmarks of the Clos du Bois style.

GRAPE SOURCE

In 2010, winemaker Gary Sitton sourced fruit for this wine from select vineyards in California's North Coast. Harvest took place September 30 through October 26, 2010, with grapes registering an average of 25° Brix.

VINTAGE

2010 was a challenging growing season, but one that rewarded our efforts with outstanding quality. The growing season began with a cool, wet spring with rainfall lasting well into June. This created the potential for a large crop, but cool, breezy conditions during bloom resulted in a moderate crop set. The cool weather extended through the summer, with foggy days being the norm and temperatures rarely rising above 75°F. Growers diligently opened up their canopies by pulling leaves, allowing more sunlight and wind to move through their vineyards and dry out the grapes. As a result of the cool weather, harvest ran two to three weeks later than normal. Fortunately, warmer weather prevailed through September and October allowing the grapes to fully mature, resulting in a hurried, condensed harvest before the wet weather began in late October. While the cooler year was not typical, it did allow for longer-than-normal hang time, resulting in superb flavor development while preserving brighter natural acidity. The resulting wines have outstanding flavors and balance.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were machine harvested as well as harvested by hand. The wine was fermented on the skins in stainless steel tanks to dryness for about eight days with pumpovers taking place three times a day. The wine was then pressed off the skins into oak to undergo 100% malolactic fermentation with frequent rack-and-return transfers done at the end of malolactic to heavy lees. After 16 months in a combination of French, American, and Eastern European oak barrels (49% new) the wine was racked and blended before bottling.

WINEMAKER NOTES

Following its deep ruby-red color, this velvety Merlot imparts aromas of black cherry, ripe plum, and sweet tobacco with a hint of oak spice. The blackberry, black cherry, and chocolate flavors are well balanced and concentrated. The rich finish is highlighted by long, supple tannins.

FOOD PAIRINGS

This rich, balanced Merlot will pair nicely with a wide range of foods, including roast chicken and pork, or pasta with red sauce.