



FRANCIS COPPOLA DIRECTOR'S

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS OF SONOMA COUNTY

"What's amazing about Sonoma County is that it's one of only a few appellations in the world that offers a diverse range of microclimates that can accommodate both cool climate varieties such as Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, as well as warm weather varieties like Cabernet and Merlot."

—Corey Beck, Director of Winemaking

2008 FRANCIS COPPOLA DIRECTOR'S MERLOT

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| APPELLATION:..... | Sonoma County | ◇ | BARREL REGIMEN: 14 months, 70% French oak, 30% American Oak; 40% new oak |
| BLEND:..... | 100% Merlot | ◇ | SUGGESTED RETAIL:..... \$21.00 |
| ALCOHOL:..... | 14.5% | ◇ | |
| RELEASED:..... | August 2010 | ◇ | |

HISTORY

Several years ago when the Coppola family opened the doors to its wine and food destination in Sonoma County, California, the winemaking team was asked to create a series of wines that would reflect its own interpretation of Sonoma County.

The winemakers decided to produce two separate collections in order to showcase Sonoma County as one of the premier wine growing regions of the world. The first—Director's Cut—offers limited production wines that are grown in the distinct sub-appellations of Sonoma, small areas that produce specific terroir traits we like. The second—Director's—is comprised of five classic varieties, which are grown in diverse vineyards across the entire expanse of Sonoma County.

By blending the fruit from a variety of geographic climates, we're able to create wines that offer lush, ripe fruit flavors, a light silky texture, and soft, supple tannins. Director's wines demonstrate Sonoma County's unique character and style.

VINTAGE

The 2008 vintage was quite challenging because of weather extremes early and late in the season, but fruit quality remained high. Spring frost damaged some vineyards, thereby reducing the overall crop yield. On the upside, having less fruit meant that the vines could spend more energy on fewer grape clusters. In the end, our Merlot had tremendous flavor, extreme ripeness, and intense concentration because of the low yields.

WINEMAKER NOTES

Even though Merlot is a sturdy grape that thrives in many environments, it must be harvested at precisely the right moment and finessed in the cellar so that it doesn't become flabby or overly ripe in flavor. Director's Merlot is made primarily from Clones 3 & 9, sourced from vineyards just at the edges of the fog line. Both of these clones offer intense fruit flavors, which is why we are fond of using them. Clone 3 grapes contribute traditional plum flavors and lushness while Clone 9 is dense, deeply colored, and more tannic. When we blend these Merlot selections together, we create a perfectly balanced wine, expressive on the palate and long on the finish.

TASTING NOTES

The 2008 Director's Merlot offers powerfully ripe fruit flavors offset by supple tannins and a moderate display of spicy oak. Layered upon a soft, velvety texture are vibrant impressions of plums, wild berries, dark chocolate, sage and vanilla. It pairs perfectly with burgers topped with bleu cheese, roast turkey, and double-baked potatoes with cheddar.

—COREY BECK, WINEMAKER

