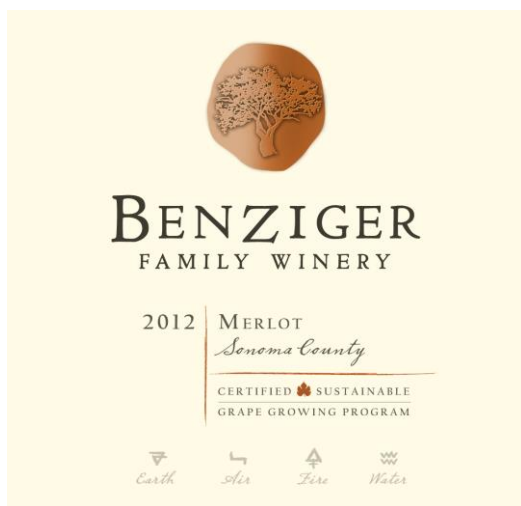


BENZIGER

FAMILY WINERY

2012 MERLOT SONOMA COUNTY

Alcohol 14.5% | TA .56 | pH 3.66



TASTING NOTES | Our 2012 Sonoma County Merlot has inviting aromas of cherry and spice, which translates well at first sip. Marion berry and a subtle floral essence linger, as its velvety tannins give this merlot a smooth, polished finish. A delicious full-bodied Merlot, that should pair nicely with either pork or beef tenderloin.

WINEMAKING | Handpicked fruit for this Merlot was sourced specifically from areas in Sonoma County that elicit the ultimate expression of full fruit and velvety texture, while maintaining varietal integrity. In the winery we used a variety of techniques to maximize flavor intensity and retain bright fruit flavors while managing tannin levels, including cold soaking, pump over, and varying fermentation lengths and temperatures. The wine was

aged in French and American oak for 16 months.

VINTAGE | 2012 proved to be a seamless year for growing wine grapes of penultimate quality. Dry spring days were ideal for even bud break and cane growth. Mildew pressure minimized by a drier than normal spring and early summer winds helped keep the humidity low. Flowering and set was complete in a short and even cycle resulting in balanced vines and even veraison. Full flavor maturity was reached at lower sugar levels while still retaining postured and vibrant acidity, providing lift and length as well as integrated tannins and excellent flavor extraction.

BENZIGER FARMING PRACTICES | At Benziger Family Winery, we are dedicated to winemaking that reveals the true character of the vineyard, the varietal and the vintage in certified-sustainable wines defined by individuality and the passion of the people who make them. This wine was made with grapes grown by certified sustainable farming methods. Our sustainable philosophy promotes natural vineyard management, restoration of the land and biodiversity on the estate. We believe these practices result in wines that reflect the authentic flavors, aromas and character of the vineyard.