

2010 HARTWELL ESTATE MERLOT
STAGS LEAP DISTRICT, NAPA VALLEY



HARTWELL
ESTATE VINEYARDS

*100% Hartwell Estate Vineyards
Stags Leap District, Napa Valley
88% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Sauvignon*

*Harvested September 4th – September 10th
Aged 18 months in 100% new French oak barrels
Release Date: Spring 2013*

The 2010 vintage will be remembered for its unique challenges. Record-breaking low temperatures and unusually high rain totals occurred throughout the spring, leading to a delay in budbreak. Summer remained cool with the second coldest July in 50 years in the Bay Area. These conditions led to vigorous vine growth of both shoots and leaf canopies increasing the possibility of mold and botrytis. Many growers dropped crop and pulled leaves, opening up the canopy for additional sun exposure and better airflow. Then, on Aug. 23, the serious heat came. Temperatures soared well above 100 degrees for several days, breaking records around Northern California. Many grapes burned and raisined in the heat, leading to extensive crop loss. However, despite these challenges, and the late rains in October, we have produced powerful wines with great fruit expression and amazing mouthfeel.

Always limited in production, Hartwell's 2010 Estate Merlot exhibits the true essence of this noble Bordeaux varietal. Aromas of dark chocolate, black cherry, fresh tea leaf and cardamom lead into complex flavors of plum jelly, candied dates and tamari soy finishing with notes of caramel and French roast coffee bean. This wine is a joy to drink upon release but will develop added complexity over the next decade in bottle.

Benoit Touquette, Winemaker

*Grow the best grapes....
....Make the best wine.™*