

R. MERLO

ESTATE VINEYARDS

CHARDONNAY
VINTAGE 2003, TRINITY COUNTY

ESTATE BOTTLED AT THE HYAMPOM VALLEY RANCH, TRINITY COUNTY, CA

WINE DESCRIPTION

Butterscotch, hazelnut and apricots enhance the foreground aromas of pineapple, almonds, vanilla and orange blossoms in this bright, straw-colored wine. Flavors of crisp Fuji apples and cream spiced with cedar and vanilla crème brulee lead to lingering stone fruit and soft finish.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

2003 began with an extremely cool wet spring. There were several storms that spit snow on the mountains around Hyampom through the end of April. When the sky cleared, the temperatures plummeted. The vines were way behind going into June, but caught up slowly during summer. The Chardonnay was harvested the last week of September and resulted in wonderful bright wines, missing any effects of the later fall frosts.

FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

Chicken Cordon Bleu with a hazelnut crust and finished with poached pears and brandy pair perfectly with this crisp and creamy wine.

HYAMPOM VALLEY RANCH

The R. Merlo Estate Vineyards are located on the riverbanks of the wild and scenic South Fork of the Trinity River. Surrounded by 6000 ft. mountains on all sides, the vineyards are higher than most California vineyards, at an elevation of 1,250 feet. The valley floor has alluvial soils, allowing for excellent drainage and producing elegant yet complex flavors. The surrounding hillsides are composed of shallow native clay, which helps to create bold, well-structured wines. The growing season - a full three to four weeks later than that of Napa or Sonoma - allows for a much slower ripening, increasing hang time and creating full concentrated flavors without over-ripening or depleting natural acids.



GRAPE SOURCE	Hyampom Valley Ranch, Trinity County, CA
AGING	12 months, barrel fermented and sur lees in French Oak (approx. 18% new oak)
TOTAL ACID /pH	.63/3.44
RESIDUAL SUGAR	0.1%
ALCOHOL	14.2% Alcohol By Volume
BOTTLING DATE	September 2005
PRODUCTION	1040 Cases