



## **Wattle Creek 2012 Merlot Yorkville Highlands, Mendocino**

### **Winemaker Notes**

This Merlot has a complex aromatic palate with notes of green olives and dried tobacco leaves and a touch of tea leaf. There is an inherent dustiness intermingled with notes of cedar and chocolate. This wine is medium body with pleasantly chewy tannins. Flavors of dried herbs, cedar and dusty nuances mix with olives and dried black cherries bringing a lot of nuance and depth.

### **Vintage & Winemaking**

The 2012 Vintage was a classic harvest in California in terms of bud break, flowering, and fruit-set through veraison (where the berries soften and change color). The vines set a large crop, so we had to drop fruit off each vine to suppress yields and thus keep the quality high! As it turned out, the 2012 vintage was the largest California has ever known. All varietals had record or near record yields last year. Despite the copious fruit and thinning, the overall quality of the fruit that remained was high, across the board.

Mother Nature cooperated weather-wise and we sailed from veraison to harvest almost unscathed. There was a late arriving storm that passed through wine country the final 2 weeks of harvest which forced everyone's hand a bit to pick the remaining fruit. Growers and Wineries alike were not taking a lot of chances after the rain packed '10 and '11 vintages and most opted to pick their remaining fruit.

The grapes were fermented warm and the tanks were pumped over three times a day for color and tannin extraction. Due to the richness of the vintage almost exclusively free run juice made up this bottling of Merlot and we allowed for extended ageing in French Oak Barrels to tame the boisterous nature of the 2012 vintage. This Merlot was barrel aged for 16 months before bottling.

<b>Appellation</b>	<b>Yorkville Highlands</b>
<b>Percentage breakdown</b>	<b>Merlot 100%</b>
<b>Vintage</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Oak Maturation</b>	<b>16 months</b>
<b>New Oak</b>	<b>65 %</b>
<b>French oak</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Alcohol</b>	<b>14.5 %</b>
<b>Production</b>	<b>180 Cases</b>