Robert Keenan Winery

## 1998 Napa Valley Merlot

The mild September and October of '98 allowed Keenan's Merlot grapes to mature slowly and evenly, and the cooler growing season naturally lightened crop, creating more intensity in the wine. In fact, due to the low yields production was thirty percent lower than previous years.

As with past vintages of Keenan Merlot, the wine was produced from a blend of Keenan's mountain grown estate fruit, and fruit harvested from select vineyards within the Napa Valley. The estate Merlot grapes from Spring Mountain District supply body, structure and density, while the purchased grapes soften the wine and add complexity.

After harvest and fermentation the wine was aged in French and American oak barrels for a full two years. Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon were added to the Merlot before bottling, and the wine was allowed to age for nine months in the bottle before release.

Keenan's '98 Merlot maintains the full body and rich character for which Keenan Merlot's have become known. The finished wine shows concentrated ripe plum and black cherry in the nose, followed by cocoa and roast coffee bean. These nuances are carried across the palate with rich velvety textures, and a toasty vanilla oak finish makes the wine complete.

### Reviews:

*Wine & Spirits Magazine*: 90 Points

Robert M. Parker, Jr., *Wine Advocate:* 87 Points

*"Keenan's 1998's include a soft, mocha-infused, berry flavored, harmonious-tasting 1998 Merlot. The wine has low acidity, good balance, and a tasty up-front, plush style. Drink it over the next 6-7 years."*

2001 Orange County Fair: Gold Medal

Jerry Mead's New World Wine Competition: Silver Medal

### Wine Data:

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| Alcohol: | 13.5% |
| Total Acidity: | 0.62 grams/100 mL |
| pH: | 3.43 |
| Residual Sugar: | Dry |
| Bottling Date: | December 13, 2000 |
| Production: | 2,100 Cases |
| Blend: | 3% Cabernet Sauvignon<br>6% Cabernet Franc |

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