



Robert Keenan Winery

2003 Merlot, Napa Valley

Keenan Winery is located in Spring Mountain District, high in the Mayacamas mountain range above the town of Saint Helena. Seventeen acres of Merlot vines were planted in the gravelly soils surrounding the winery, and it is these vines that produce some of the finest Merlot in Napa. The vineyards are situated above the dense layer of fog that creeps up the Napa Valley most evenings. Consequently the vines warm up earlier in the morning and stay warm through the night. The combination of warm temperatures, steep hillside vine rows and gravelly soils promotes more stress on the vines leading to increased intensity in the finished wine.

The 2003 Keenan Merlot is composed of seventy-three percent Keenan Estate Merlot. Twenty-two percent of the wine is Merlot fruit harvested from the Napa Carneros region. In addition, five percent Estate Cabernet Sauvignon has been added to the blend in order to add further complexity and structure. After hand harvesting, the grapes were de-stemmed, then inoculated with Montrachet yeast. Fermentation ranged from eight to fourteen days before pressing.

The '03 Merlot has been aged in thirty-three percent new French and American oak barrels for eighteen months. The resulting wine shows intense aromas of black cherry, blackberry, and cassia. Complex nuances of cocoa and coffee bean emerge as the wine opens up. This is a "big" Merlot that will age for many years to come.

Robert M. Parker, Jr.'s The Wine Advocate

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“The dark ruby-colored, elegant 2003 Merlot is primarily from the estate vineyards, and includes 5% Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. Offering hints of mocha intermixed with coffee bean, black cherry, earth, and herb characteristics...”

Wine Data:

Alcohol:	14.3%
Total Acidity:	0.61 grams/100 mL
pH:	3.50
Residual Sugar:	Dry
Bottling Date:	July 18, 2005
Production:	3500 Cases
Blend:	95% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon
Vineyard Sources:	73% Estate Merlot
.	22% Merlot Napa Carneros
.	5% Estate Cabernet Sauvignon