



HILL FAMILY
E S T A T E



2010 Merlot
Beau Terre Vineyards

Production: 468 cases

Composition: 83% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Malbec, 4% Petit Verdot

Vineyards: 98% Beauterre Vineyards, 2% Napa Valley

Appellation: Oak Knoll 54%, Atlas Peak 10%, Napa Carneros 34%

Elevations: Oak Knoll and Napa Carneros are Valley floor, Atlas Peak is about 1200 ft

Cooperage: 32% new Oak: 45% French Stavin, 65% neutral French

Alcohol: 15.04%, TA 0.58, pH 3.66

Vineyard Notes: Hill Family Estate takes Merlot seriously, and they believe the Merlot grape has a lot to offer that Cabernet Sauvignon cannot quite achieve. The Beauterre, Baker, and Red Door vineyards are centerpieces for Doug Hill's accumulated viticultural knowledge. From the row spacing to the trellising, the row direction and the clones selected, everything has been carefully thought out to give Merlot its best expression. Both the Rausetto clone with its great color and sophisticated tannin structure and the 181 clone with its plushy fruit, were selected for this Merlot.

Winemaker Alison Doran's Tasting notes: (bottled 7/26/12)(tasted 1/1/13);

It is interesting to watch the progress this Merlot has made. This is the first year we have been able to add significant amounts of Cab, Malbec and Petit Verdot to the Merlot to amplify the dimensions of the blend. The aromas have beautiful dark fruit, black cherry and boysenberry, with a hint of spicy oak and red currant. The palate is still evolving, and though the front of the palate has some velvety fruit, the mid palate is in the big explosive fruit stage, supported by good acidity and a lively finish. Another year will increase the mouth coating dimension, and another year will bring more quiet dignity.

