



MARTIN RAY WINERY
2000 MARIAGE MERLOT
SONOMA COUNTY

TECHNICAL NOTES

Varietal: 96% Merlot,
4% Cabernet Franc

Harvest Dates:

October 15–17, 2000

Brix at Harvest: 24°

Alcohol: 13.6%

Total Acidity: .64

pH: 3.79

Quantity Produced: 3,500 cases

“Great wine lights a fire in the soul.”—MARTIN RAY

THE VINEYARDS

Martin Ray coined the French term “Mariage” to describe “marrying” the best grapes from different vineyards to produce the finest wines. In following this tradition, our 2000 Martin Ray Merlot is a superior blend of grapes carefully selected from vineyards throughout Sonoma County. Grapes harvested from the magnificent Alexander Valley contribute spicy, lush fruit and terrior characteristics. Concentrated fruit flavors and exotic spice emerge from the grapes picked from the Russian River Valley, adding wonderful sophistication to the wine. The balance of grapes are harvested from various small, distinctive Sonoma County vineyards; which bring a rich complexity to the finished wine.

VINTAGE NOTES

The 2000 vintage had a perfect start with bud break in the middle of March. The weather throughout the spring and early summer remained pleasant, and then July hit with a record heat wave. Cold temperatures slowed things down a bit in August and late September brought cooler weather, which allowed the complexities of the fruit to develop. Fortunately this was followed by warm weather, which completed the ripening process. The long harvest blessed our winemaker with additional time to concentrate on ripening the fruit to its peak maturity.

WINEMAKER’S NOTES

I firmly believe that the Martin Ray “Mariage” concept—combining the best grapes from various vineyards, allows us greater latitude to choose only the best vineyard lots, which in turn consistently results in a more substantial wine. I have taken a traditional approach to both the winemaking and in the final blending of the Martin Ray Merlot. Martin Ray summarized this method elegantly when he said; “We add nothing to our wines, nor do we take anything from them. With infinite care, we leave them alone.” The 2000 “Mariage” Merlot begins with aromas of exotic spice, pepper and rich supple oak. The full palate is packed with black cherry, pepper and chocolate flavors. The generous flavors echo perfectly through to a deep and elegant finish. Our 2000 Sonoma County Merlot continues the Martin Ray tradition of wines of exceptional quality, structure and finesse.