

# 2014 Meritage

## Paso Robles

### *Sensory Notes*

Our 2014 Meritage presents elegant aromas of black currant, cassis and ripe plum, complemented by intriguing earthy notes and cedar. The color is deep ruby red, dense, and reflects the intensity of this vintage, the vineyard, and the careful selection of our finest lots. On the palate the wine shows exceptional depth of flavor with firm but velvety tannins. The classic blend of noble grapes produces a wine of finesse and character featuring our Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Malbec.

### *Vintage Notes*

The 2014 vintage was another challenging season in Paso Robles. We began our spring with marginal moisture, the product of meager winter rains. This daunting start was followed by a warm early spring with average temperatures through April and May that gave us a reasonable start to the growing season. These moderate temperatures and seasonable conditions gave us excellent flowering and fruit set circumstances that resulted in a normal cluster count. From here our temperatures remained moderate until we experienced a short heat spike at the end of August and again longer sustained heat spell at the start of October before moderating to normal temperatures to finish the season. Overall we experienced a vigorous harvest season that presented perfect conditions for excellent ripening at a bracing rate resulting in amazing depth of color and wonderful flavor maturity.

### *Winemaker's Notes*

Our 2014 Meritage was produced from hand-harvested grapes picked in early-October. Following harvest the grapes were crushed to small tanks and inoculated for fermentation. Fermentation and maceration lasted 10 days and was assisted by traditional hand pump-over to maximize color and flavor release. Subsequent to fermentation the wine was drawn off and the skins were pressed. After a short settling period the wine was racked into French oak barrels where it completed malolactic fermentation and matured for 18 months. Prior to bottling the wine received a final racking to stainless steel where the blend was assembled and the wine prepared for bottling.

### *Wine Facts*

Blend: **46% Cabernet  
Sauvignon**  
**42% Merlot**  
**12% Malbec**

**Total acidity: 6.58 g/L**  
**pH: 3.67**  
**Alcohol: 14.5%**  
**Bottled: August 2016**

