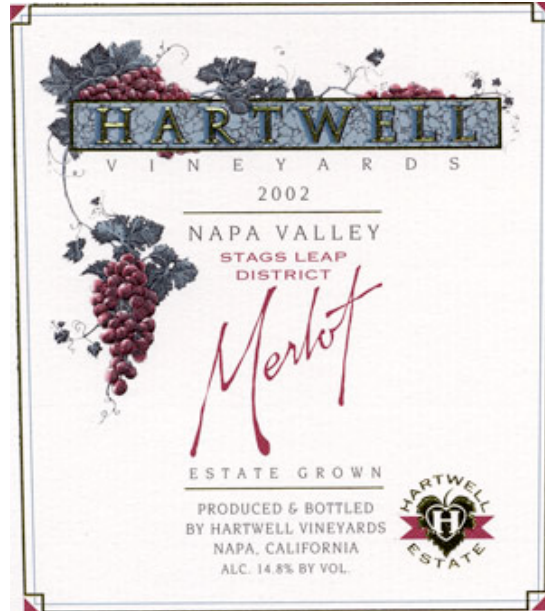




2002 Hartwell Estate Merlot Stags Leap District

Ripe blackberries, smoke, flint and butterscotch are the first aromas to jump from the glass. This dark, alluring wine continues to open, revealing notes of cherries, cream and caramel. All of these complex characters follow through on the palate. Bright acidity gives the wine freshness and vivacity. Tannins are present, but characteristically full and round. The ripe fruit, smoke, and butterscotch flavors and aromas are persistent through the long finish.

Cool temperatures, a long growing season, and heat spikes near harvest meant for fully mature fruit. Gentle handling in the winery, malolactic fermentation in the barrel, and a mix of coopers and barrel ages gave the wine depth and subtlety. This Estate Merlot will certainly benefit from additional bottle age, and should continue to develop for 5-10 years from vintage date.



Appellation: Stags Leap District

Varietals: 88% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Sauvignon

Harvest dates: September 2002

Aging: 20 months in mainly French oak barrels

Alcohol: 14.8%

9L cases of 750ml produced: 803 cases (bottled as 1606 units of 6x750ml)

Release date: February 2005