

GROWING SEASON NOTES

The 2021 growing season in the Tephra Ridge Vineyard was marked by early bud break and a lighter-than-average crop. Spring conditions prompted bud break slightly earlier than usual, and wind and light rain during flowering may have contributed to smaller cluster sizes. These lighter clusters facilitated steady ripening and an early harvest, with most areas completing harvest by early October.

VINEYARD NOTES

Made from a combination of grapes on the steep, 35-acre Tephra Ridge Vineyard. Tephra (“ash” in Greek) is rock ejected by volcanic eruption. This historic vineyard is located at the north foothill of Howell Mountain. Its thin, gravelly loam and volcanic soils typify the finest Bordeaux variety sites, as do its climate, topography and vegetation – fir, madrone, black oak and ponderosa pine – yielding a rustic fruit profile.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The Merlot grapes were hand-harvested and destemmed into stainless steel tanks for fermentation. Gentle pumpovers coaxed out the color and tannins, while an extended maceration (18 days on skins) helped resolve the tannins. Post-pressing and Malolactic fermentation, the wine was put to French and Hungarian oak barrels – 25% new. The final blend was assembled just prior to the next vintage and returned to barrel for a total of 22 months oak aging.

TASTING NOTES

The 2021 Tephra Ridge Merlot has notes of bramble berry with coffee and striking dried sage notes. Playful acidity throughout, with dark fruit, dried sage, and an earth driven profile. Integrated, silky tannins highlight the French and Hungarian oak used to age this wine.



VARIETALS:	98% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot
APPELLATION:	Lake County, California
VINEYARD:	Tephra Ridge Vineyard
ALCOHOL %:	14.5 %
AGING:	22 months in barrels, 25% new French and Hungarian
T/A:	5.8 g/l
pH:	3.73
ACCOLADES:	93 Pts. Wine Enthusiast