



*Nestled in a pristine alpine valley in southwestern Oregon's rugged Siskiyou Mountain range, Foris Vineyards has been a true viticultural pioneer for over thirty five years. Specializing in Alsace varietals and Pinot Noir, Foris Vineyards consistently garners accolades for both quality and value. The dramatic natural beauty and purity of our surrounding environment is reflected in the vibrant epicurean wines that have earned us a place in some of America's finest restaurants and wine shops.*

## 2007 Merlot

Merlot's boom in popularity during the mid-eighties enticed many growers to plant this noble variety, regardless of whether or not their site was well suited to it. Thankfully time has a way of sorting out some of the more misguided planting decisions and it is now safe to say that the eastern half of the Rogue River Valley has proven itself as one of the west coasts top regions for outstanding Merlot.

2007 was an easy vintage as far as the weather was concerned. We were able to let the fruit hang until it showed optimal flavor development and only began picking in the third week of October. At Foris Vineyards, we handle Merlot in what might be considered an unconventional manner. Instead of large closed-top stainless steel tanks, we prefer the small open-top bins that we use for our Pinot Noir. These shallow vessels allow more of the skins to stay submerged during the fermentation, giving a more thorough yet gentler extraction. Matured in primarily neutral French oak for eighteen months, the wine was bottled without fining or filtration on the 12th of May 2009.

Merlot has a reputation for being softer and earlier to mature than Cabernet Sauvignon. While this is a fair assessment, it does not mean that it does not benefit from bottle age. On its release in November 2011, this Merlot has had over two years in the bottle to knit together a silken texture and develop a fine nose of dark cherries and dried roses. While this wine would be considered medium bodied, it shows great balance and complexity that should carry it for another three to five years.

Analysis:

Average brix 23.9

PH 3.61

TA .6.5

Alc/vol 13.3%

525 cases bottled