

## Mt. Brave Mount Veeder Merlot 2014



Mt. Brave Vineyard sits high atop Mt. Veeder at an elevation of 1,400 to 1,800 feet. Mt. Veeder has been planted to winegrapes since the early 1860s by such winemaking pioneers as Charles Krug, Agoston Haraszthy, Frederick Hess and William S. Keyes, and wines from Mt. Veeder achieved recognition as early as the Paris Exposition of 1900. The parcel that became the Mt. Brave Vineyard, in the northern reaches of the Mt. Veeder American Viticultural Area (AVA), was originally purchased in 1841—before the Gold Rush and the Civil War.

High-elevation winegrowing requires a painstaking, labor-intensive approach. Thin, rocky soils and steep slopes make water retention a challenge and erosion a threat, but the vines benefit from the struggle and produce concentrated flavors. This regularly extends the growing season into November, and the increased hang-time results in peak ripeness and full varietal complexity. The grapes were hand-harvested during cool morning hours, at an average Brix of 26.5°. The wine was fermented in stainless steel and then underwent native malolactic fermentation in barrels to round acidity and softly integrate the vanillin character of French oak (93% new). After barrel aging for 19 months, the wine was bottled without fining or filtration.

### 2014 Vintage Tasting Notes

A warm April and May pushed the growing season along, resulting in a fairly reasonable crop load, followed by a June and July that saw several heat spikes but nothing that lasted for more than three days. The late Indian Summer provided overall good conditions for ripening fruit without the worries of sun burn, shrivel or early fall cold. The 2014 Mt. Veeder Merlot presents flavors of dark chocolate and boysenberry, with great acidity and structure, which lifts this wine on your palate. The long, steady finish exhibits why mountain Merlot stands alone.

### Chris Carpenter, Winemaker

Among the tight-knit winegrowing community in the Napa Valley, no one understands the practical difficulties and spiritual rewards of mountain winegrowing more than Chris Carpenter. With an already legendary Napa winemaking record for Lokoya and Cardinale, Chris had little to prove when the Mt. Brave project began to evolve in 2007. And yet, the opportunity to craft wines from Mt. Veeder that would pay homage to the mountain's rich history, while expressing a new, distinguished view, proved irresistible.



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