



HILL FAMILY
E S T A T E



2015 “Beau Terre” Merlot

Production: 627 cases (no large formats)

Composition: 94% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Malbec

Vineyards: Beau Terroir, Dunlap, Bardessono, Baker and Beau Terre

Elevation: Valley floor - 1200 ft.

Cooperage: 70% new Oak (11% French Oak Stavin, 11% Trust Hungarian, 11% Canton Grand Cru American Oak, 66% French oak – Treuil, Tonnellerie O, Orion, Remond)

Alcohol: 14.5%, TA 0.57, pH 3.8

Bottling date: March 7, 2017

Release date: Spring 2019

Release price: \$44.00

The Beau Terre vineyards are centerpieces for Doug Hill’s accumulated viticultural knowledge. From the row spacing to the trellising, the row direction and the clones selected, everything has been carefully thought out to give Merlot its best expression. In with bloom over by May 20, another long dry season early loomed ahead, and by July 30 most of the Merlot was at 50% veraison in Oak Knoll, and by August 4 in Carneros. By August 21, brix numbers were 21 to 22 but color remained elusive. Beau Terre reached nice color saturation by September 8, but Carneros had to wait until early October before color got out of the light plum category and into the serious purple. VQ51 yeast was used on Beau Terre and Red Fruit on the Napa Carneros lots and fermentations got going hot and fast, pressing off in about 12 days. The blend was put together in August, 2016 and it was bottled unfinned and unfiltered in March 2017.

Winemaker Alison Doran’s tasting notes:

The 2015 Merlot opens with deep aromas of cassis, blackberry and black licorice. The wine is big and intense with a power unusual in Merlot. Black cherry and mocha flavors from the French oak pull things together, followed by a solid core of acidity and a few tannins still hanging around the edges. 2015 was a small crop with big intensity and this wine is a reflection of that.