

VARIETAL COLLECTION

Merlot

BY CALDWELL

2021

Vintage:	Eighth
Composition:	95% Merlot, 5% Malbec
Clone:	1, 3, 181, and 595
Appellation:	Napa Valley, Coombsville District
Vineyard:	Caldwell Vineyard Estate, Established 1981
Vineyard Blocks:	Caldwell Block 17 (only a hint of block 14 made it, that's it), Block 8AB
Yield:	3.0 Tons per Acre on Average
Average Vine Age:	30 Years
Grape Varieties:	See Composition Section
Rootstock:	3309 and 5C
Harvest Date:	Multiple

Vintage Summary: The 2021 Vintage can be classified as a severe drought year here in Napa Valley. With only 7.3" of rain from January to March, bud break was early, and bloom had higher stress than typical – leading to a smaller crop. Currently, I'm drawing comparisons in the cellar to the 2015 vintage, but with much less heat towards the end of the growing season, helping retain freshness and varietal expression and individuality. Overall, a very high-quality vintage (if you had water to irrigate with, which we luckily did), I foresee the vintage to be known for its structure, freshness, and long-term age-ability.

Fermentation Vessel:	Stainless Steel
Yeast:	Multiple
ML Bacteria:	Multiple
Wood Origin:	French Oak (Jupilles, Bercé)
Ageing:	100% French Oak, 70% New, for 20 Months
Fining:	None
Filtering:	Filtered
Alcohol:	14.9%
Bottled on:	July 13, 2023

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: I said this last year, but I'll say it again, "it is not every year that we make a Varietal Collection Merlot, but with 20(21)'s being the 4th year of drought season, we knew we could make something special." Aromatics are perfumed and filled with sweet cassis, a hint of dill frond, juniper, and oyster shell surrounded by high toned red/blue fruits. Incredibly similar to its 2019 counterpart, but the 2021 comes across slightly less supple, and more edgy and vivacious. Loads of very ripe raspberry and every-so-perfectly ripe blueberry lead into a very long finish accompanied by super fine voluminous tannins and perfect pitch acidity. The only big difference I can come up with aromatically compared to the 2019 is a vein of pure black oolong tea, along with the finish tannins which will be rewarded with a few years in bottle.

Optimal Drinking Period:	Now – 15 Years
Production:	51 Cases
Price:	\$175 / 750ml

