

# TOASTED HEAD®

BARREL AGED

## 2012 CALIFORNIA MERLOT

*We named Toasted Head for the age-old practice of toasting the inside of barrel heads with fire to help create the rich toasted flavor in all our wines.*

### VINEYARDS

Bordeaux grapes like Merlot favor good sun exposure and soil that has enough clay in it to retain some moisture and keep the earth a bit cooler. That's why we sourced the fruit for our Merlot from vineyards in Mendocino and Lake Counties that offer these growing conditions, along with cool nights, to produce a wine with subtlety and luscious texture.

### 2012 VINTAGE

An ideal growing season assured an outstanding 2012 vintage in California. Moderate weather throughout the season put little pressure on the vines, providing well-balanced, rich, robust fruit flavors.

### WINEMAKING

The grapes were crushed and immediately inoculated for a vigorous, warm fermentation in stainless steel tanks for 7 to 14 days to fully extract color and flavor. Upon near dryness the wine was drained and pressed and underwent a secondary fermentation (malolactic fermentation) in stainless steel tanks. Once both ferments were complete and the wine stabilized, we aged it in a mixture of new and lightly used French, European, and American oak barrels. Depending on the lot and when it finished ferment, the individual small lots aged for between 12 and 16 months before blending and bottling.

### WINEMAKERS NOTES

On the nose, aromas of cherries and black fruit are nicely framed by toasty oak aromatics of vanilla and graham cracker with a hint of ginger and cedar spice. The palate is big and soft with flavors of rich black fruits and cherry pie rounded out with a touch of smoke and chocolate. This wine pairs well with lasagna (and other Italian dishes) or herb baked chicken with a garlic cream reduction.



#### TECHNICAL DATA

Winemaker:	Melanie Walker	Alcohol:	13.5%
Vintage:	2012	PH:	3.48
Composition:	91% Merlot, 7% Petite Verdot, 2% Petit Sirah, 1% Cabernet Sauvignon	Total Acidity:	5.8 g/L
Sourcing:	Lake and Mendocino Counties	Release Date:	March 2014
Aging:	14 months in combination of French, European and American oak		