



# LEESE - FITCH

CALIFORNIA

MERLOT

2016

## TASTING NOTES

Our 2016 vintage developed fruit with big ripe character and more depth than average. Upon harvesting the grapes, we were very pleased with the character that developed. The 2016 Leese Fitch Merlot blend showcases aromas of dark cherry and raspberry fruit with hints of toasted coconut, oregano, and crushed cardamom. The palate starts with dried blueberry and then erupts into cherry and raspberry preserves fruit flavors. The mid palate has good depth and structure with mouthfilling soft tannins. Finally, brambly fruit, fig newton, and toasty French oak notes show on a lingering finish.

## WINEMAKER NOTES

The grapes of 2016 ripened early in hot weather and the winemaking team was able to take advantage as a number of growers had to sell their fruit before it fell apart. Super ripe Paso Robles Merlot makes up 42% of our 2016 Leese Fitch Merlot blend, adding great depth and round silky tannins to the blend. Clarksburg and Mendocino Merlot add some cool fruit nuances and blue fruit while the Lodi Merlot continues the ripe fruit march. To balance out all this ripe Merlot, we added some Lodi Cabernet Sauvignon to give the blend some much needed structure and cassis fruit notes. Clarksburg Tempranillo adds another dimension of dark raspberry fruit while Paso Robles Syrah adds more blackberry fruit with an earthy almost leathery edge to the blend.

## BLEND

84% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon,  
5% Tempranillo, 5% Syrah

## APPELLATIONS

42% Paso Robles, 30% Clarksburg,  
24% Lodi, 4% Mendocino

## ANALYSIS

pH 3.61  
TA 5.9 g/L  
ALC 13.5%  
RS 2.4 g/L

## UPC

8 33302 00242 3

## FOOD PAIRINGS

This Merlot pairs well with a portobello mushroom burger topped with smoked provolone cheese and fig jam, ham and pineapple pizza from your favorite Hawaiian pizza spot, or spaghetti with sweet sausage and sautéed peppers.

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