

Baehner Fournier Vineyards  
2010 Merlot Estate Grown  
Santa Ynez Valley AVA

83% Merlot/17% Cabernet Sauvignon

Merlot, the most widely planted red grape in the Bordeaux region of France, reaches its apogee of quality on the Right Bank of the Gironde River in the Pomerol district. There, often blended with small amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, it produces wines much appreciated for their juicy black plum and boysenberry flavors; soft, bushy textures; and moderately tannic backbone. Planted in gravelly-clay soils, Merlot in Pomerol is, above all, known for its immediate charms and remarkable ability to evolve and develop with bottle age. At Baehner-Fournier, it is this very particular expression of Merlot to which we aspire.

Made of 100% estate grown grapes from the Baehner-Fournier Vineyards, our 2010 Merlot expresses the sand and gravelly-clay terroir of 2 radically sloped, northeast facing blocks, planted in soils very similar to those found in Pomerol and in the neighboring St. Emillion. Fruit, picked at moderate levels of ripeness, is destemmed and gently crushed to small open top fermenters and, after a 3 day cold-soak, spends an average of 18 days on skins to best extract the intense flavors and aromas that the estate vineyard produces. Aging for 19 months in 20% new French oak has resulted in a polished, glossy mouth feel and subtle aromas of coffee and mocha.

Lifted aromas of black cherry and currant give way to deeper notes of blackberry and tobacco. Similar flavors of black cherry dominate the palate along with soft Santa Rosa plum nuances. Satiny in texture—the result of gentle fining with egg whites—our 2010 Merlot features a brilliant burst of vibrant acidity on the finish, keeping the wine fresh and balanced. Lush and drinkable now, this wine should develop further coffee and tobacco characters with 5 to 7 years of bottle age.

Nick de Luca, Winemaker

151 cases produced