

# ROBERT HALL

*2005 Merlot*

*Paso Robles*

## *Winemaker's Notes*

Deep dark ruby red color with complex mineral and rich briary aromas of blackberry, raspberry, and black currant reiterated by tasty flavors of red berries, plum, and hints of tobacco all supported by firm but silky tannins.

## *Vintage/Viticulture*

The 2005 vintage will be remembered as a bountiful season in Paso Robles. An unusually wet winter brought us in excess of 150% of our normal average rainfall. This abundance of precipitation provided the vines with the moisture necessary to grow a luxuriant canopy. Managing this large crop to obtain small berry size and concentration of fruit color and flavor was the challenge, and was achieved by carefully monitoring irrigations and by thinning the crop. Cool temperatures started the season and continued until just before veraison, when we experienced a short heat wave through veraison. We then returned to perfect sugar building weather to finish the season, allowing in lengthy hang-time for excellent flavor maturity. The result of this vintage is richly colored wines with superb intensity of ripe flavor.

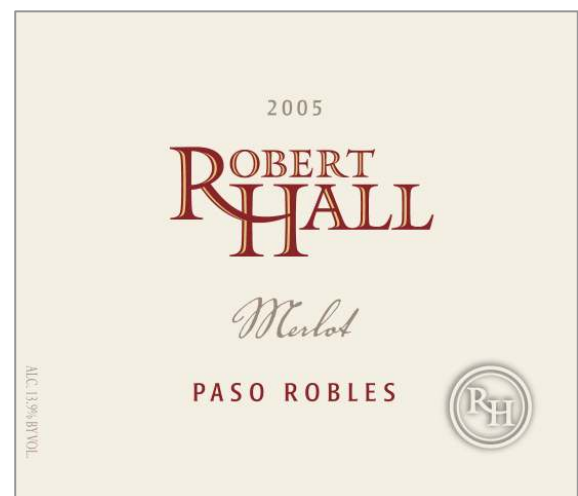
Our 2005 Merlot hails from several vineyards planted in the uplands of the Estrella Plain. Cabernet Franc and Syrah, from the gently rolling loamy soils of our "Terrace Vineyard" are blended as an enhancement to the Merlot. The fusion of bright fruit-forward Merlot from Paso Robles, married to concentrated Cabernet Franc and soft and voluptuous Syrah grown on a rigorous well-drained soil, yields a blend with opulent fruit, intriguing complexity, and satisfying structure.

## *Fermentation/Maturation*

Our 2005 Merlot was produced from grapes picked in mid-September. Maceration lasted 10 days and was assisted by traditional pump-over to amplify color and flavor release. Subsequent to fermentation, the wine was drawn off and the skins pressed. After settling, the wine was racked into French and Eastern European oak barrels where it completed malolactic fermentation and matured for 16 months. Prior to bottling the wine received a final racking to stainless steel where the blend was assembled in preparation for bottling.

## *Statistics*

Total acidity: 0.62%  
pH: 3.53  
Alcohol: 13.9%  
Blend: 84% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc,  
1% Malbec  
Barrel Aging: 16 Months  
Bottling date: February 2007



*"The Essence of Paso Robles"™*

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