

# ROBERT HALL

2007 Merlot

Paso Robles

## *Winemaker's Notes*

Rich briary aromas of blackberry, raspberry, and black cherry accentuated by hints of tobacco and earth emanate from our 2007 Merlot. Lush, ruby red color indicates the level of concentration yielded by the vintage and the vineyards. On the palate, rich flavors mirror the aromas and are complemented by soft, silky tannins on the finish

## *Vintage/Viticulture*

The 2007 vintage was an unusual growing season in Paso Robles. The winter was very dry with persistent cold temperatures not seen here for many years. The lack of rain along with the cold winter temperatures limited our crop. Vineyard conditions became mild and amazingly temperate, with temperatures on the cool side until July where we experienced high temperatures for about two weeks. Crop water and heat stress during the heat wave were managed by carefully monitoring irrigations. Following this period, we saw a return to moderate temperatures for the balance of the season. The weather was so moderate that what started as an early harvest, stopped for a couple of weeks, then stretched into a late, slow harvest with just enough sugar building weather to ripen the crop. The slow build at the end of harvest allowed for long hang-time for excellent flavor maturity. The result of this vintage is deeply colored wines with exceptional intensity of flavor.

Our 2007 Merlot hails from several vineyards planted in the alluvial soils of the Estrella and Creston Districts and to the sedimentary clays of the Templeton District west of town. Cabernet Franc from the gently rolling loamy soils of our "Terrace Vineyard" is blended to soften and accent the Merlot. The fusion of concentrated fruit-forward Merlot from Paso Robles, married to soft and flowery Cabernet Franc grown on a rigorous well-drained soil, yields a blend with opulent fruit, intriguing complexity, and satisfying structure.

## *Fermentation/Maturation*

Our 2007 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 18 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: 0.58%

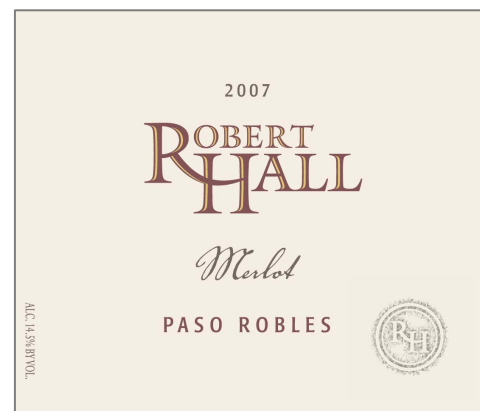
pH: 3.65

Alcohol: 14.5%

Blend: 89% Merlot, 11% Cabernet Franc

Barrel Aging: 18 Months

Bottling date: August 2009



*"The Essence of Paso Robles"™*

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