

# PEDRONCELLI

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## 2000 BENCH VINEYARDS MERLOT SPECIAL VINEYARD SELECTION DRY CREEK VALLEY

### BENCH VINEYARD SOURCES

For our Special Vineyard Selection Merlot, two sites were chosen in northern Dry Creek Valley: the Pedroncelli Estate Vineyards along Dry Creek Road east of the winery, and Jasper Long's vineyard, a couple of miles down the road. The name chosen for this vineyard blend describes the natural terraces that flank Dry Creek Valley and rise gradually into the steep hills. Characterized by sloped topography and gravelly/rocky residual soils, the "Bench Vineyards" offer unique growing conditions that bring out the best in Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc.

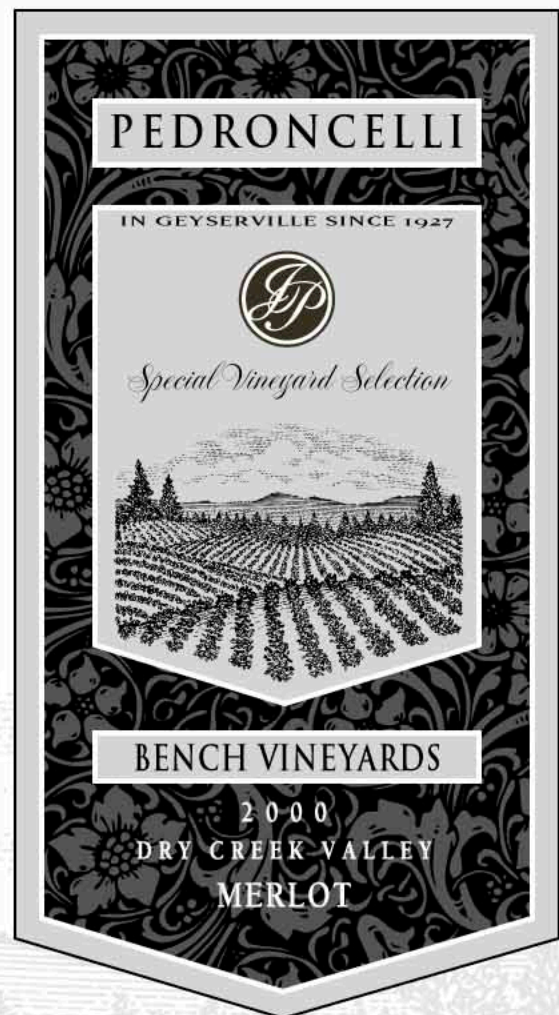
### WINEMAKING

The 2000 harvest brought in ripe, clean fruit harvested the third week of September. The fruit was crushed into stainless steel fermentors and fermented for just over a week. The frequent pumping of juice over the skins (or cap) during this process brings to the wine a substantial increase in color and flavor intensity.

The young wine was aged in small American oak barrels for 12 months in order to develop smoothness and complexity. A blend of 25% new oak was used in the barrel aging program; allowing the fruit flavors to come forward while relying on a subtle backbone of oak components. Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon add fruit flavor with more tannin to make this a fuller-bodied, age-worthy Merlot.

### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Appellation: Dry Creek Valley  
Composition: 85% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc,  
6% Cabernet Sauvignon  
Barrel Aging: 12 months in American oak  
Alcohol: 13.7% pH: 3.45 Acidity: .60g/100ml  
Bottled: August 2002 Production: 10,000 cases



### WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

*Deep purple-garnet in color. Spice and black cherry aromas leap into the nose! Wonderfully aromatic yet subtle toasty oak complements the fruitiness in the mouth. Incredibly soft and smooth.*

*I look forward to cellaring a bottle or two, seeing how the wine will develop in 2-3 years, yet enjoying it for dinner tonight.*

*Mandy McCord*

Mandy McCord