

**Toad Hollow Vineyards
1999 Merlot Reserve
Richard McDowell Vineyard Russian River Valley**

Our Merlot Reserve ...

Merlot on our minds – then – Merlot on our vines.

With visions of Pétrus dancing in our heads, we ripped out the apples and planted Merlot. That was a few years ago. Toad Hollow was in need of a big prestigious red wine to run with our Chardonnay.

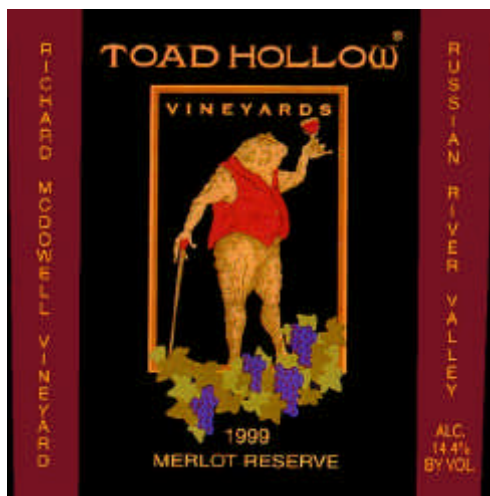
It gives us the greatest of pleasure to offer you the results of these years of work, high hopes, and the omnipresent peril.

This is our **Merlot Reserve** – planted, grown, and bottled by Toad Hollow. The second bottling of our first reserve wine. Merlot does best in sandy, clay-like soils as proven in France in the province of Pomerol where it gives birth to the mighty Pétrus – the pinnacle of all Merlot wines. We had the soil, we had the cuttings, and we had the perfect medium temperature range preferred by the Merlot grape to do its very best. We also had Richard McDowell. Richard McDowell has worked as a vineyardist in Sonoma County for over thirty years and has planted and developed over 3000 acres of fine varietal grapes in that same time. Mr. McDowell tends our Merlot vineyard – so – we named the vineyard after Richard. No one was surprised.

With all the elements in place we have created a Merlot of which we are very proud. It's big and spicy but not as tannic as Cabernet Sauvignon. A gentle but sinuous noble red wine that welcomes most company with a warm generosity of taste as well as the versatility of filling many sensory needs on many levels.

This wine is a keeper and will age beautifully over ten to fifteen years, but also sports the spontaneity of a young thoroughbred raring to run now or to carry easily into the next decade.

Unfortunately, there is not much of this wine to offer – next year we hope to have somewhat more. Depending of course on the weather and Mr. McDowell.



Pertinent facts:

Alcohol:	14.46%
RS:	0.15%
TA:	0.57 g/100 ml
pH:	3.56