

# 2016 Merlot

Woods Vineyard  
Dry Creek Valley

## Vineyard and Winemaking

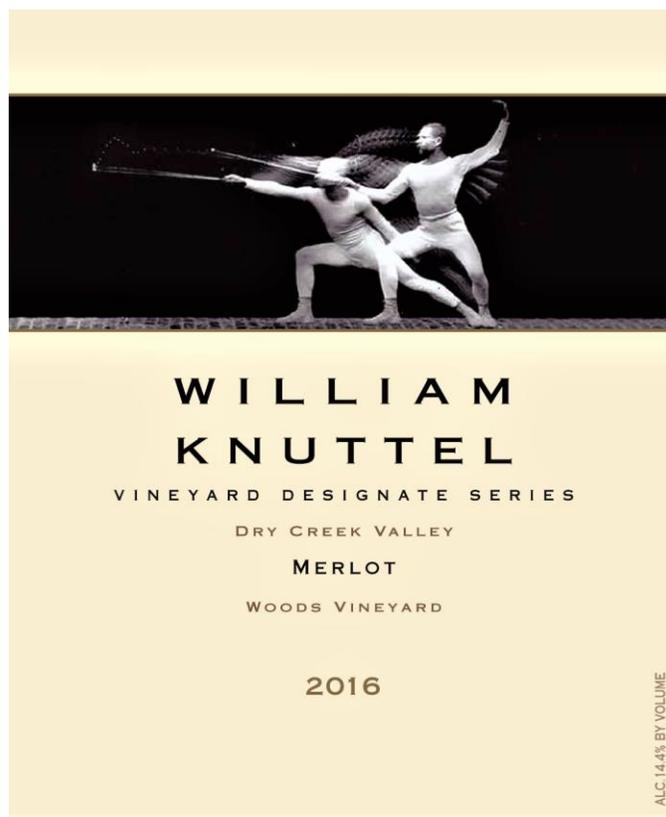
Woods Vineyard is a family-owned and family-farmed vineyard in Dry Creek Valley. The vines were planted by Frank Woods, one of the founders of Clos du Bois Winery, and the vineyard is 100% sustainably farmed. The 2016 William Knuttel Merlot is crafted in the style of “Right Bank” Bordeaux. The blend is predominantly Merlot, but we judiciously utilize our legal limit of 5% blending to add a dollop of Cabernet Franc from Fred Peterson’s vines to the north, to give the wine that Right Bank feel and nuance.

Fully ripened clusters from the near perfect 2016 vintage were hand harvested and gently crushed to a small fermenter. The must was inoculated after two days of cold soaking the berries. Extraction with three pumpovers daily continued until the wine was completely dry, at which time it was pressed to 100% French oak, predominantly Francois Freres, for malolactic fermentation. Twenty-two months aging in barrel, with quarterly racking, completed the classic Bordeaux-style winemaking utilized in the making of this Merlot. We master blended select barrels of this single vineyard lot into the finished wine, with the final blend consisting of all French oak, with 25% new. The depth and balance of this Dry Creek Merlot allowed us to bottle the wine without fining.

## Tasting Notes

The 2016 Woods Vineyard Dry Creek Valley Merlot is a classically rich, ripe and structured Sonoma County Merlot with a nod towards “Right Bank” Bordeaux. Aromas of blackberry, ripe plum, vanilla, cedar and cigar box tease the nose. The palate follows with mouth-filling blackberry and plum flavors, and hints of vanilla and oak spice. Soft, smooth tannins integrate with the extended structure to make this a balanced, elegant Merlot, from entry all the way through to the lingering finish.

YIELD: 3.1 tons/acre (average)  
AGING: 22 months in French oak, 25% new, 75% 2 year-old  
COOPERAGE: Francois Freres, Kadar (Taransaud)  
TA/pH: 5.6 g/L & 3.78  
CASES: 488 (12 x 750ml)



William Knuttel was formerly Winemaker & Vice President with Chalk Hill Estate from 1996 to 2003, specializing in ultra-premium Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, & Sauvignon Blanc, and Dry Creek Vineyard’s Executive Winemaker from 2003 to 2011. As proprietor of Tria, 1995 to 2003, he produced fine Pinot Noir and Zinfandel. As Saintsbury’s winemaker from 1983 to 1996, Knuttel established that brand as a leader in ultra-premium Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Designer Jeffrey Caldewey captured William Knuttel’s kinetic wine world with Marey’s 1890 “chronophotograph,” in which multiple exposures are superimposed to show the complete motion of “le coup d’eepee.” The image metaphorically highlights the balance, finesse, power and poise valued by the wine-maker.