



## Turner & Cole 2002 Hopper Creek Merlot

**Profile:** Gorgeous dark berry fruit on the nose, well-extracted, with heavenly spice and vanilla. Rich mouth-feel is very sexy - one can drown in the Ripasso / Amarone type flavors as they come pouring out of the glass and into your mouth! The sweetness derived from the alcohol makes this work as a standalone aperitif or as an accompaniment to a very fine repast. Tannins add the structure that balances the fruit. This wine will pair well with a wide range of foods, but especially full flavored meats. The French oak adds the smoothness to the long finish. Its complexity and sophistication will please the most demanding wine critic.

**Production:** 300 dozen.

**Alcohol:** 14.1%.

**Vineyards and Winemaking:** The small Yountville vineyards (a mere 6 acres) are named for the nearby creek. They were originally planted in 1984 with Pinot Noir. In 1991 the vines were pulled and replaced with Merlot stock in an east-west configuration to improve sun exposure and reduce the potential for wind damage. In 1996, some Cabernet Sauvignon vines were added to the vineyards. Only about 3.5 tons are produced per acre annually. Yields are carefully watched so as to not overproduce and dilute the fruit. Fruit is dropped to maintain optimal yields for winemaking. Small lot fermentations produce the high quality wine that this fruit demands. After 30 months in French oak, the wine was aged in bottle for another 42 months before being released. A total of 6 years of aging to make it just perfect!

**Winemaker:** Alan Haywood, winemaker for Hooper Creek and Dios Triumph. His bold winemaking techniques preserve the fruit, while developing flavorful, balanced food wines.