

## **Marilyn Wines Background**

In 1981 Robert and Donna Holder and a group of friends started making wine together at their home near St. Helena in the Napa Valley. One evening in 1983, over dinner and a bottle of homemade Merlot, the concept of "Marilyn Merlot" was born. The wine enjoyed a good deal of popularity around the valley and was often donated to charity auctions and given as Christmas gifts.

In 1985 the idea matured into a business, producing limited amounts of Marilyn Merlot for sale to the public. In subsequent years, the family of Marilyn Monroe-related wines has grown to include Velvet Collection, Marilyn Cabernet and Norma Jeane as well as Marilyn Merlot. Marilyn Wines holds an exclusive agreement with the estate of Marilyn Monroe for the use of her name and a number of famous, engaging and historically significant photographs of the actress. Royalties from sales of the wine are distributed according to Marilyn's will to the Lee Strasberg Theater Institute and to the Anna Freud Foundation in London.

Marilyn Monroe's fame during her lifetime grew after her death into legend. "Some Like It Hot," and countless of her moments on screen have never cooled in the eye of the public. Her career off camera has been detailed and celebrated in countless books, and those in her life – from Joe DiMaggio to John F. Kennedy – found their own celebrity eclipsed by hers. Even today, her very name commands attention like no other, as witnessed by the fact that at the most recent auction of Marilyn Monroe memorabilia, her tiny phone book attracted the biggest bid, at \$90,000.

Marilyn Monroe – the icon and enduring legend – lives on in the family of wines the Holders created. Since 1985, they have expanded their offerings, marrying grapes from the Napa Valley with great photographs and stylish design. Today this combination has been endorsed by collectors around the world who are equally fans of Marilyn Monroe and fine wine.

"We've seen Marilyn Merlot and its 'sisters' appreciate in value more dramatically than other wines," explains Robert Holder. "For example, twelve-bottle sets of the 1985 through 1996 vintages of Marilyn Merlot sell for as much as \$7,500, appreciating well beyond the levels of many first-growth Bordeaux and other collectible wines."

The star-power combination of outstanding Napa Valley wine and Marilyn Monroe's image and legend has grown into its own success story, and has demonstrably improved with age.

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