Kendall-Jackson

Crafted from cool-climate coastal vineyards , it highlights Sonoma County's ability to produce Merlot with both elegance and depth.

Vintner's Reserve Merlot 2021

California, USA

Region and Vineyards

This wine is sourced entirely from **Sonoma County**, where Merlot thrives in the county's diverse terroirs. The cool Pacific influence tempers the sunny California climate, ensuring **long growing seasons with marked diurnal variation**. This allows the grapes to ripen fully while preserving acidity, giving Merlot both plush fruit and structural backbone.

The soils across Sonoma's Merlot vineyards vary from **volcanic loams to alluvial gravels**, adding complexity and mineral tension to the wines. Hillside vineyards contribute concentration and darker fruit notes, while valley floor sites offer freshness and rounder tannins. Together, these terroirs create a wine that is layered, approachable, and expressive of its origin.

Winemaking

The 2021 Vintner's Reserve Merlot is a blend of **96% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 1% Malbec, and 1% Cabernet Sauvignon**. Each lot is vinified separately, allowing the winemaking team to carefully select the final blend for balance and harmony.

Aged **15 months in oak barrels—65% French (8% new) and 35% American (10% new)**—the wine achieves a polished balance between ripe fruit and gentle oak influence. With **14.5% alcohol, pH 3.62, and total acidity of 5.5 g/L**, the result is a Merlot that combines richness with freshness, framed by supple tannins and subtle spice.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with purple highlights.
- **Aroma:** Blackberry bramble, ripe cherry, cream, caramel, and hints of black pepper spice.
- **Palate:** Juicy red fruit and blackberry are layered with toasty oak, lively acidity, dark chocolate, and spicy tannins, finishing long and elegant.

Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 96% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 1% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Malbec

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Did you know?

Merlot was once California's **most planted Bordeaux variety**, prized for its soft texture and approachability. In Sonoma County, winemakers increasingly highlight its **serious side**, producing Merlots with depth and structure rivaling Cabernet Sauvignon .

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Herb-crusted pork tenderloin** - the wine's cherry and spice notes resonate beautifully with rosemary and thyme.
- **Roast chicken with wild mushrooms** - earthy flavors highlight the Merlot's mocha and dark fruit layers.
- **Grilled salmon with red wine reduction** - the wine's acidity and supple tannins complement rich, oily fish.
- **Semi-hard cheeses like Comté or Gruyère** - the nutty, savory profile pairs seamlessly with Merlot's plush fruit.