

2011 Merlot Cuvée Sonoma County



A whole new reason to love Merlot

**77% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8 % Malbec
5% Cabernet Franc, 2% Sangiovese**

We could have called this wine Merlot. However, that would miss the point. It's all about the blend. Cuvée means wine blend in French. Good winemaking is like good cooking. What makes a reduction sauce so delicious is the combination of flavors, the layered sensations. This is the essence of Merlot Cuvée.

Grapes sourced from seven of the twenty-nine vineyards that supply grapes to Deerfield went into this Cuvée. Our winemaking focuses, not only on the individuality of each varietal, but the terroir of particular vineyards. The blend, done by taste, married them into a harmonious, full flavored sensation. Barrel aging for 40 months, an exceptional commitment, made the wine smooth and mellow. Each element plays on the other; nothing's out of place; every sip memorable. It's Merlot taken to a different level.

The 2011 Vintage was a challenge. It rained a lot in October, which ruined a lot of grapes. To make good wine we needed our A game. It's what separates the Men from the boys, the women from the girls. We had to be selective with what we kept and sold off the rest. Rest assured, the ones we kept, the 2011 Deerfield wines you will be enjoying, are what you would expect from Deerfield. From a difficult year, they shine.

The focus of Merlot is on the front of the palate, expanding forward like a bubble. The Cabernet Sauvignon tugs on the Merlot pulling it back to fill the mid-palate and produce a long finish. Malbec adds depth and blackberry essence to the bottom back of the palate. Cabernet Franc takes the flavors to the top, like dark chocolate. Sangiovese adds a touch of strawberries to the mid palate. Merlot Cuvée is delicious.

The barrel program used 80% American oak. The front palate focus of American oak compared the mid-palate focus of French oak better fits the Merlot.

Like all of the Deerfield wines this Merlot Cuvée is a **Clean Wine™**. This means the wine is bottled with very low levels of sulfites, which can cause allergic reactions, and very low levels of histamine, which can cause red wine headaches. Our motto is Clean Wine, Clear Head. Even if you think you aren't sensitive to these things, you'll enjoy the freedom from their affects.

Tasting notes by Robert Rex, Winemaker:

As of this writing, in November 2015, the wine has been in the bottle for eight months and is now just beginning to show its true colors. It is immediately enjoyable, and I know it will continue to improve, showing more forward fruit over the next six months or more. When you swish the wine around your mouth to reach every part of the palate and let the alcohol take the flavors upward, you can pick out the individual varietals. Subtle nuances keep it interesting throughout the evening. PJ and I cook every day and we've paired this wine with a variety of foods, from oysters to pasta with pesto to grilled salmon and veggies. It always works. It is also one of our go-to stand up wines.

Alc. 13.9%, R.S. 0.28%, SO₂ at release 12 ppm. 100% barrel aged for 40 months. New French oak 15%. New American oak 80%. 20% new oak overall.

500 cases bottled March 25, 2015. Released September, 2015

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