



THE
STEVEN KENT
WINERY

2005 Merlot
CENTRAL COAST

When my grandfather died 16 years ago, I cleaned out his wine cellar and found a jar of cherries he had soaked in brandy. I don't know how long they had been in there, but man were they good. Putting my nose in a glass of our first Merlot, those aromas (the bright fruit of the cherry and the earthy, high-toned brandy note) came rushing back. These notes are only two of a plethora of intense and complex aromatic contributors, however. With aeration sweet oak, truffle, black raspberry, subtle olive, and loamy earth all play a role. Contrary to the popular perception of Merlot being an overly soft, simple wine, this offering has substantial tannin and acid backing wonderful flavors of dark fruits and earth.

Grown in a relatively cool area, the 2005 Merlot displays a structure consistent with cooler days: substantial acid, somewhat restrained fruit in the mouth, and a palette of aromas that lean more toward the earth than to fruit; the addition of 15.4% Cabernet also contributes to the wine needing a couple of years to reveal all of its glories. Given its abundance of acid and tannin this wine will age gracefully for years.

Only 304 cases of this wine were produced exclusively for members of the Future Release Program.

FUTURE RELEASE PROGRAM HISTORY

The Future Release Program was begun in 2003 with the intention of focusing predominantly on Bordeaux varietals. While the emphasis of the Collector's Circle wines is on fruit and short to medium-term drinkability, the Future Release Program wines are suited more to extended aging and pairing with bigger dishes. Now that our estate vineyard is producing Malbec (one of five classic Bordeaux varietals) our vision of a Bordeaux varietal wine club will come completely into fruition in 2010. The 2005 Merlot is our first vintage of that grape.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date: October 17 – 21, 2005

Fruit: Perfectly ripe and clean fruit, some of the best of the vintage, arrived at the Winery with brix levels of just over 25°. 84.6% Merlot, 15.4% Cabernet. Alcohol 15.2%.

Fermentation: After destemming and crushing each lot of fruit was fermented separately in 1.5 ton, open-topped fermenters. Fermentation and maceration lasted about two weeks. Malo-lactic fermentation was induced in barrel.

Aging: Aged in French oak, approximately 54% new oak, 46% second use.

Time in Barrel: 18 months

Release Date: April 12, 2008