

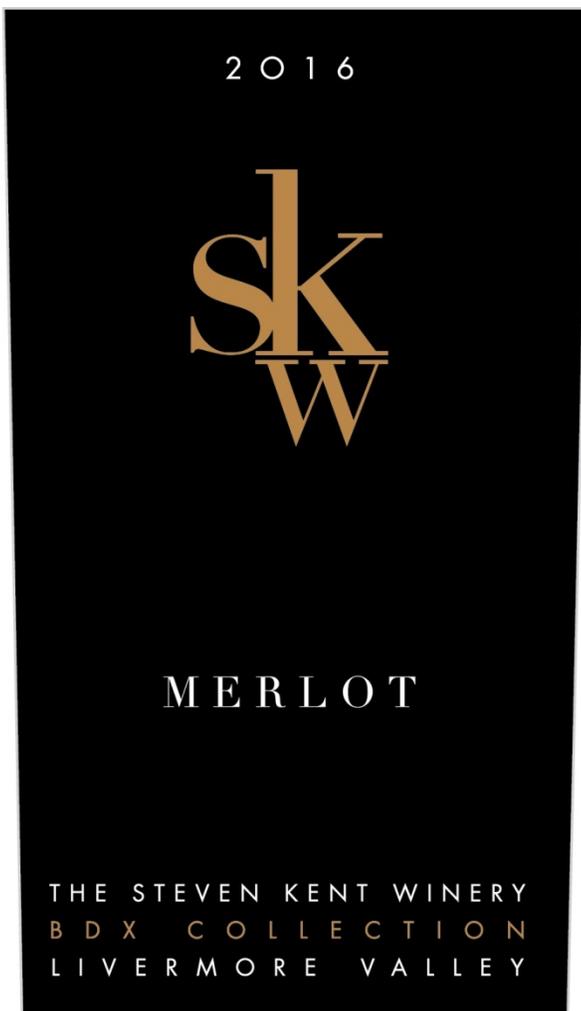


THE STEVEN KENT WINERY

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BDX COLLECTION 2016 MERLOT | LIVERMORE VALLEY



HARVEST NOTES

The 2016 vintage started life, for the first time in several years, with significant winter rainfall (Livermore saw rainfall in January 2016 exceed that of January 2015 by 243%). Helping to recharge aquifers and wells, rainfall was also helpful in leaching out some of the dissolved solids that had accumulated during the drought. Budbreak and Bloom occurred in temperate weather, and the season continued in a fairly typical Livermore Valley fashion: dry and warm through to harvest. The trend of significantly earlier harvests stopped in 2016 as we picked our first fruit one day later than the previous year. 2016 was a uniformly excellent year for fruit quality and yield. I believe this vintage will rival 2014 in excellence.

WINEMAKER NOTES

As with all of our BDX varieties, Merlot is hand-picked, destemmed, and fermented in small open-topped boxes. After a 5-7 day cold-soak period (when color is gently extracted and indigenous yeast are allowed to begin fermentation), primary fermentation will last about 7 days. Depending upon the vintage – and in 2016 this pertained – we extend maceration for 7-21 days longer, until we feel the wine has acquired the appropriate stability of structure. Consistent with a growing affinity for up-front fruit versus new oak aromas and flavors, this wine was aged in French oak barrels (only 45% of which were new) for 20 months.

TASTING NOTES

The last of the 2016 vintage wines to be released, the Merlot from Ghielmetti Vineyard is delicious and interesting in a number of ways. At 13.3% alcohol, this wine has the weight, pace, and vibrancy that is emblematic of the 2015 vintage (and of a style that I wish we were able to capture more frequently) more than 2016, which is weightier, and a touch higher in alcohol. In the nose, the wine embodies the black cherry, dried herb (Bay and Sage) and earthiness that we prize in Merlot. Also, typically, and to this wine's advantage, there are no overt wood notes intruding indelicately upon the purity of fruit and herb. In the mouth, this young wine is racy, high in acid, and slightly austere...all qualities that make it a beautiful food partner and that will – over time – marry into a richer, less acid-driven wine. Because of the structure, this wine will have a long period of positive evolution and a long plateau before inevitably succumbing to age. This wine will age beautifully – with proper storage – for 10 - 20 years.

VINEYARD SOURCE(S)

100% Merlot from Ghielmetti Estate Vineyard.

HARVEST DATA

Oct 13, 2015 | pH 3.65 | TA 0.70 | Alcohol 13.3%

FERMENTATION

After destemming and crushing each lot of fruit was fermented separately in 1 ¼ ton, open-topped fermenters. Fermentation and maceration lasted about three weeks.

COOPERAGE

20 months in 100% French oak, 45% of which was new.

CASES PRODUCED

194 cases

RELEASE DATE

February 6, 2020