

ALEXANDER VALLEY VINEYARDS

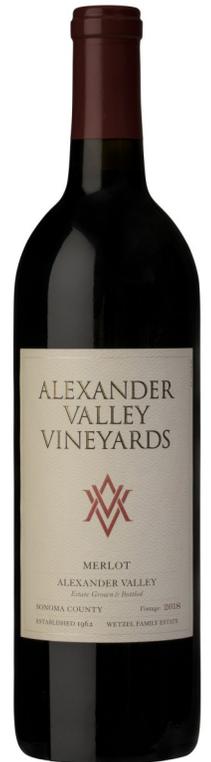
2018 Estate Merlot

Merlot from the Wetzel Family Estate has a reputation for being a big, complex wine. First produced in 1984, this has been a classically structured wine each year, often showing as much tannin as our Cabernet Sauvignon.

The 2018 growing season began a bit cooler than the past few vintages, but we had a near-perfect fruit set with moderate summer temperatures and relatively few heat spikes. The mild weather led to a longer maturation period, allowing the grapes to ripen slowly. Harvest began on September 12 and the fruit had excellent flavors and balanced natural acidity.

We prune our Merlot vines heavily and drop fruit several times during the growing season so the remaining clusters ripen evenly. Winemaker Kevin Hall has found that fermenting Merlot at a slightly lower temperature than some of our other Bordeaux varieties maintains the lush flavors and structure. After fermentation the lots spend 14 months aging in a combination of French and American oak barrels.

This wine always impresses red wine lovers, and we refer to it as a Merlot for Cabernet lovers. There are spicy aromas of cassis, black cherry, plum, vanilla, oak and mild chocolate in the glass. This wine has broad mouth-feel with flavors of juicy red cherry, cassis, blackberry, plum and chocolate. This is a nicely balanced wine with a long, juicy finish.



Food Pairing: The fruit and structure of this wine pairs with a variety of big flavors. A family favorite is *Beef Stroganoff*. Classic pairings include lamb chops, duck, prime rib and filet.

Accolades: 2018: 92 points & Gold Medal - *Press Democrat Wine Challenge*
2018: 90 points & Gold Medal - *Sunset International Wine Competition*

Profile:

- Serious Merlot
- Juicy, aromatic, structured

About Alexander Valley Vineyards:

AVV was recognized as a “Sonoma Green Business” in June 2010 and is one of only 17 wineries to achieve the certification. The certification recognizes AVV as an environmental leader that conserves resources, minimizes waste and prevents pollution, according to environmental officials with Sonoma County who reviewed the winery’s achievements for two years before awarding the certification. Alexander Valley Vineyard’s many “green” initiatives have been in use for over the past three decades.

Technical Data:

Grapes: 100% Merlot
Harvest Dates: September 12 – October 31, 2018
Barrel Aging: 14 months in French & American oak, 25% new
First Vintage: 1984
Alcohol: 14.0% **ph:** 3.58 **TA:** 6.1 g/L
UPC: 0-85798 08862-1 750ml cork finish
0-8579808861-4 375ml Stelvin



Healdsburg ~ Sonoma County ~ California

avvwine.com

