

CLOS LACHANCE

VINEYARDS

2016 ESTATE MERLOT

Merlot has often been an afterthought in the wine world, comfortably sitting behind the main stay of Cabernet Sauvignon. At Clos LaChance we bring Merlot to the forefront and give it the attention and dedication that it deserves and longs for. The Central Coast of California is a premier growing region for varietals like Merlot that thrive in more moderate climates and cooler temperatures. Merlot's original home, in the Bordeaux region of France, has cool nights and mild afternoon temperatures – much like the Central Coast. Aged in Premium French Oak the Clos LaChance Estate Merlot is medium bodied with bright fruit notes coupled with earthy undertones.

HARVEST NOTES

The 2016 growing season was a welcome relief for wine producers, as 2015 was one of the most difficult and lowest yield vintages to date. In the final year of a long drought, 2016 brought on an early bud break giving rise to a quick and fast start to the season. A prolonged spring with mild temperatures allowed for vines to adjust to the lack of water in the soil profile. The vines then quickly shot up with vigor as the warm summer months came. The spring and early summer provided ideal temperatures and frost was not of concern for the 2016 vintage. The summer was seasonably above average giving us much tougher skins on the grapes and a condensed/smaller fruit size upon full veraison. The above average temperatures carried through to the fall and lasted through harvest giving us even ripening and above average quality grapes. 2016 was truly one of the best growing seasons in decades and gave us some of the highest quality grapes we have ever seen on our estate.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The Clos LaChance Estate Merlot is handpicked and hand sorted prior to being destemmed, without crushing, then cold soaked for a full 72 hours. The Merlot is then inoculated where it enjoys a lengthy 2 week fermentation allowing for the utmost extraction of the tannins and color pigments which are held so tightly in the thick and dark grape skins. Post fermentation the wines are pressed gently in an air bladder press and transferred to oak for its lengthy aging process. The wine is aged for 16 months on 20% New French Oak and 10% New American oak, with the remainder being made up of primarily French Neutral oak. The marriage of American and French Oak works best on the Merlot variety as it brings out the bright red fruits and vanilla from the French Oak and promoting the earthy and spicy elements of the American Oak.

TASTING NOTES

Color: Soft purple and slightly opaque

Aroma: Raspberry, Blueberry, Vanilla and Tobacco Leaf

Flavor: Dried Cherries, Cranberries, Vanilla and Wet Stone

Structure: Medium Tannin, Medium Bodied, Dry Finish

Pairing: Pear Braised Rack of Lamb, Truffle Cheese and Chicken Parmesan

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Vineyards: 100% Estate Vineyards

Blend: 100% Merlot

Aged: 16 months on 20% New French Oak 10% New American Oak and 70% Neutral French and American Oak

Harvest Date: 9/22/16 – 9/26/16

Average Brix at Harvest: 24.5

pH: 3.55

TA: 0.67

Bottling Date: 2/27/18 **Alcohol %:** 13.5%



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