

2017 HERITAGE MERLOT

Sonoma Valley, Sonoma County

3 CONSECUTIVE 90+ PT VINTAGES

They year was 2017 and the harvest season was nearly complete when a wildfire broke out in the valley. As it goes, older vines get picked earlier and in this case that means we were able to harvest our special heritage blocks before the fire would prevent us from picking the rest of Rhinefarm's famous Merlot. Since the first Merlot bottling in 1976, we have never skipped a vintage, not even when things went "sideways." 2017 will be the first year without an estate Merlot to release, but we always enjoy looking at the bright side. For this story, it includes both a winery that stood through these fires as well as an epic vintage of Heritage Merlot. Normally allocated and hard to get, we have decided to expand the availability of the 2017 Heritage Merlot to all customers, and are extending club members their discount. It's not just a great wine, it's also a piece of Bundschu history.

The especially selected block of Merlot that goes into our limited-production Heritage Selection Merlot is known for power and concentration. Medium bodied, incredibly well structured, this wine is balanced and supported by subtle, supple tannins. Incredible aromas of baking spices, slate, lavender lead to an equally lush palate of dark berries, plum, savory earth and chocolate.

VINEYARD INFORMATION

Eight miles north of San Pablo Bay, the Bundschu family's 161+ year-old vineyard wraps around the southwest slopes of the Mayacamas Mountains. The terrain features steep, southwest-facing hillsides of shallow, rocky soils of volcanic ash and alluvial wash. Pervasive maritime breezes and long daylight exposure allow fruit to develop intense concentration while retaining vibrant structure. Two distinct blocks of Merlot have consistently produced top lots with the greatest complexity, concentration and balance. Each vintage, the top five barrels from these lots are selected for this distinctive bottling.

COMPOSITION

95% Merlot
4% Cab Sauvignon
1% Cab Franc

WINEMAKING

3-to-5-day cold soak
Extraction through gentle pump-overs
Lees stirring for 4 months during
secondary fermentation

ALC/pH/ACID

Alc: 14.9%
pH: 3.68
TA: 5.9 g/L

COOPERAGE

17 months
100% French oak,
60% new
Nadalie

PRICE

\$65.00

PRODUCTION

916 Cases

