

# 2018 MERLOT

Sonoma Valley, Sonoma County



## VINTAGE NOTES

2018 had incredibly moderate and consistent day time temperatures pushing this growing season until the 1st week of November. The latest we have finished picking in almost a decade. These perfect conditions resulted in impeccable fruit quality across all varietals. Flavor and phenolic ripeness was achieved at lower sugar levels. This balance has created some of the most elegant and age worthy wines produced in recent memory. Yields were also exceptional, which means great wine and lots of it. Truly a goldilocks type vintage, with all aspects (climate, hangtime, and yields) being just right.

## 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. A portion is sourced from warmer vineyard sites in Sonoma Valley to add lushness to the mid-palate.

## TASTING NOTES

After skipping a vintage for the first time in 40 years due to the 2017 fires, we are beyond thrilled to release the 2018 Rhinefarm Estate Merlot. Thanks to its natural tendency to thrive in our climate and soil, and the stellar growing conditions of this year, Team Merlot is back with a vengeance. French Thyme, Himalayan Blackberry, and Filé Powder swirl into a perfect blend of fruit and savory aromas. On the palate, flavors of dried red currant, nutmeg, and Morello cherries are balanced perfectly with fine, smooth tannins. This wine is singing its comeback song beautifully now, but the show will go on for the next 8+ years.

## COMPOSITION

92% Merlot  
4% Cabernet Sauvignon  
2% Cabernet Franc  
2% Malbec

## WINEMAKING

3-to-5-day cold soak  
Extraction through gentle pump-overs  
Weekly battonage during the native malolactic fermentation

## ALC/pH/ACID

Alc: 14.5%  
pH: 3.66  
TA: 5.8 g/L

## COOPERAGE

17 months  
100% French oak,  
40% new  
Nadalie

## PRODUCTION

3946 cases

## PRICE

\$35.00