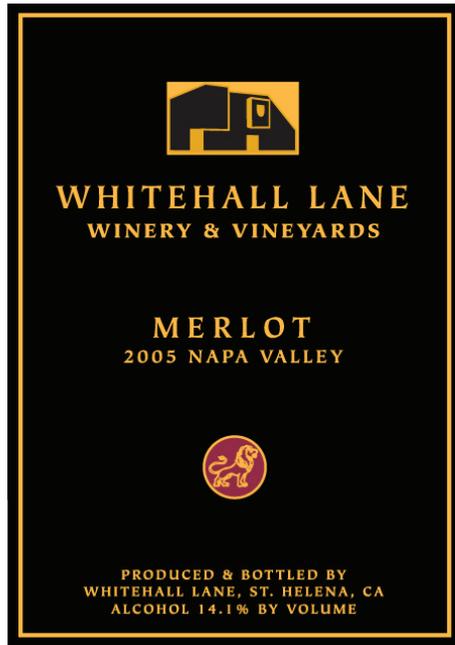


WHITEHALL LANE WINERY & VINEYARDS

2005 MERLOT NAPA VALLEY



Wine Enthusiast

-December 2008

92 Points

Editors' Choice Award

"Here's a really good Merlot from a producer that does a great job at it. It shows the rich tannin structure that Napa so effortlessly achieves, while the great vintage ripened the grapes to blackberry and cherry perfection."

Blend: 85% Merlot
8% Cabernet Sauvignon
7% Syrah

Production: 9,925 cases produced

The Vintage: 2005 was an outstanding growing year that began with cool, wet weather, followed by mild summer months. With ample moisture in the soil and warm days, the fruit ripened slowly and evenly. The Merlot grapes were harvested in the middle of September when the fruit displayed ideal balance and juicy, ripe flavors. Yields were a little higher than normal.

Winemaking: The grapes were grown primarily in two of the winery's Rutherford vineyards. The fruit was fermented at an average of 85°F with gentle pump-overs for excellent flavor and color extraction. The wine was aged in a combination of American and French oak barrels for 18 months. Since the early 1980's, Whitehall Lane has utilized the art of blending to make their Merlot with layers of flavors, complexity and balance. Cabernet Sauvignon was added to the blend for more weight in the mid-palate and increased length on the finish. The 7% Syrah enhances the aromas, texture and adds complexity to the wine.

Tasting Notes: This appealing wine offers aromas of blackberry, violet and oak. It gains its depth from a combination of plum, wild berries and cola flavors that are beautifully balanced and lingering. The wine is ready to enjoy now and will also improve with cellaring to 2009.



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