

ENTICING & IMPRESSIVE

2022 CANNONBALL CALIFORNIA MERLOT

Origin: We source from vineyard sites along the coast from Sonoma, to Monterey, to San Luis Obispo, and Contra Costa counties. We choose sites where Merlot expresses classic varietal character, showing a pleasing balance of fruit and earthy complexity. Merlot is a vigorous vine that requires management in the vineyard to achieve the correct balance between vegetative growth and crop level, and in more mild climates the weather assists and plays a key role in attaining this balance by regulating vine growth.

Winemaking: Each specific vineyard site calls for a customized winemaking approach. Our grapes are harvested either at night or in the early morning hours, then transported to the winery where they undergo a three-day cold soak. During this period, many of the color, aroma, and flavor compounds stored in the grape skins are slowly extracted and incorporated into the wine. After the cold soak, the must is inoculated with yeast strains selected to optimize varietal character and ensure a strong fermentation. Since Merlot is a delicate grape, the fermentation process is kept short and fairly warm, with minimal handling to avoid oxidizing the wine. Near the end of fermentation, the juice is drained off the skins and transferred directly to French oak barrels, where it completes primary and secondary fermentations and matures for the next 20 months. We prefer a light touch with our oak, using only 20% new oak in the aging process.

Aromas: Our 2022 Merlot charms with the allure of a classic California claret. The nose is fragrant with plum, cherry, cocoa, and rich loam notes.

Taste and Flavors: The bold, silky mouthfeel is rich with berry and earthy notes, complemented by a subtle herbal nuance. A foundation of French oak adds toffee character and structure, framing the soft tannins on the finish.

Technically:

AVA: California • Alc: 13.5% • TA:6.0 g/l • pH: 3.64 • RS: .23%

