

**VARIETY:**

Merlot

VINEYARD:

100% San Lucas

APPELLATION:

Monterey

HARVEST DATES:

Oct 29 - Nov 1, 2021

ALCOHOL: 14.8%**PH:** 3.54**TA:** 6.7 g/L**AGING:**

56% American oak

44% French oak

30% new, 16 months

BOTTLING DATE: Jun 13, 2023**CASES PRODUCED:** 196**SCHEID**
VINEYARDS

2021 ESTATE MERLOT

TASTING NOTES

Merlot is the new normal. Though unfairly treated for years, Merlot is striding confidently into your home and into your glass, brimming with bright fruit, easy tannins, and an approachable softness.

Beginning with a nose of vanilla and toasty oak, our Estate Merlot unfolds smoothly into blueberry and plum flavors, framed by a balanced acidity and lightly toasted wood notes. This full-bodied wine fills the palate with black fruit and a hint of chocolate that carries through to a lingering, lush finish. It's a perfect pairing with both vegetarian and heartier beef fare, think beef stew, short ribs or polenta-based dishes. Roll out the welcome mat, Merlot is knocking at your door.

VINEYARD

Once known as cattle country, our San Lucas Vineyard is a postcard-perfect vineyard with gorgeous rolling topography, warm sunshine-filled days, and nights that are cold and crisp. This locale marks Monterey's climatic tipping point, and it is so distinguished that the San Lucas AVA was established in 1987. Our San Lucas Vineyard is home to not just this beautiful Merlot, but also stellar Cabernet Sauvignon, Rhône varietals such as Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre, and some of our unique varietals, including Charbono, Barbera and Primitivo. We've been growing wine grapes on San Lucas since 1979 and it's a vineyard that holds a special place in our hearts.

VINTAGE

The 2021 growing season was marked by moderate temperatures, which further extended Monterey County's naturally long hang-time. To start off the season, we were met with a swift and unusually large rainfall in late January. Moving into summer, drought conditions returned and, combined with consistent marine layer coverage, fruit maturity was delayed. As the summer unfolded into early fall, the marine layer moved off the coast, providing a much-welcomed late surge of heat and sunshine. The extended time on the vine allowed the fruit to slowly mature and resulted in refined phenolic development and fantastic fruit quality that shines throughout our 2021 vintage wines.

WINEMAKING

Upon arrival at the winery, the grapes were destemmed, crushed, and fermented in 1½ ton open-top fermenters. Punch downs, where the firm cap of skins and seeds that bubble up and form on the surface during red fermentation are submerged, were conducted twice a day for two weeks. After settling the heavy solids, the juice was racked clean to barrels and aged for 16 months. It is wonderful to drink now, yet also suitable for additional aging.

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