

# ALEXANDER VALLEY VINEYARDS

## 2015 Estate Merlot

Merlot from the Wetzel Family Estate has a reputation for being a big, structured wine. First produced in 1984, this has never been one of those fruit bombs or thin and wimpy wines.

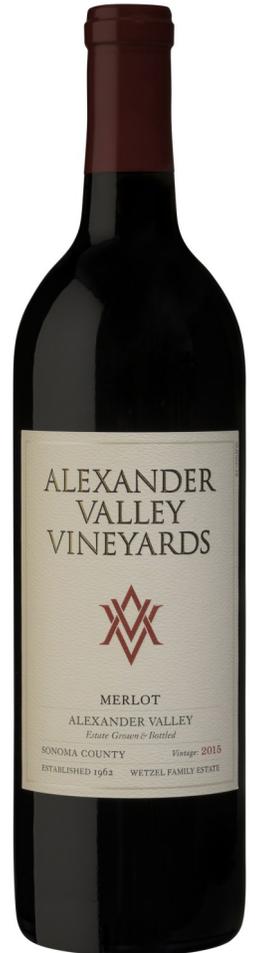
The western drought continued in 2015 and was once again the topic of much discussion. A cool spring, rain at bloom and a hot July along with the continued effects from the lack of rain contributed to lower yields. As a result the grapes had terrific concentration and superb fruit flavors at harvest.

We prune our Merlot vines heavily and drop fruit several times during the growing season so the remaining clusters ripen evenly. Winemaker Kevin Hall has found that fermenting Merlot at a little cooler temperature than some of our other Bordeaux grapes maintains the lush flavors and structure. After fermentation the lots spend 15 months aging in a combination of French and American oak barrels.

This wine always impresses red wine lovers, and we refer to it as a Merlot for Cabernet lovers. There are spicy, earthy aromas of cassis, black cherry, plum, vanilla, oak and cedar in the glass. This wine has broad mouthfeel with flavors of cherry, cassis, blackberry, plum and chocolate. This is a big, nicely balanced wine with chewy tannins on the long finish.

**Food Pairing:** Big wines pair well with big foods - try lamb chops, prime rib, steaks and veal chops.

**Accolades:** 2015: 88 points - *Beverage Testing Institute*  
2015: Gold Medal - *Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Competition*



**Profile:**

- Serious Merlot
- Juicy, aromatic, structured

### About Alexander Valley Vineyards:

AVV was recognized as a “Sonoma Green Business” in June 2010 and is one of only 17 wineries to achieve the certification. The certification recognizes AVV as an environmental leader that conserves resources, minimizes waste and prevents pollution, according to environmental officials with Sonoma County who reviewed the winery’s achievements for two years before awarding the certification. Alexander Valley Vineyard’s many “green” initiatives have been in use for over the past three decades.

### Technical Data:

**Grapes:** 100% Merlot  
**Harvest Dates:** September 10– October 6, 2015  
**Barrel Aging:** 15 months in French & American oak, 25% new  
**First Vintage:** 1984  
**Alcohol:** 14.0% **ph:** 3.58 **TA:** 6.6 g/L  
**UPC:** 0-85798 08862-1 750ml-cork **SRP:** \$20  
0-8579808861-4 375ml-Stelvin **SRP:** \$10



Healdsburg ~ Sonoma County ~ California

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