

TRUCHARD VINEYARDS



1996 Merlot

- Vintage:** 1996 was a warmer vintage, which brought the fruit to ripeness more quickly than in previous years. Nevertheless, the early harvest resulted in a wine with complex aromas, rich flavors, and a powerful palate.
- Vineyard:** Merlot is harvested from five separate hillside locations on the Truchard Estate Vineyard. The differences in soil, exposure, and temperature at each site combine to produce a unique "micro-climate" for the grapes. As a result, the wines from these hillsides each have their own identity, and each contributes different characteristics to the final blend. The vines vary from 8 to 25 years old.
- Harvest:** September 18 - October 16 • 24.3 °Brix • 3.48 pH • 7.2 g/l TA
- Winemaking:** All of the fruit was gently destemmed and crushed into fermenters, then inoculated with Pasteur Red yeast. Each fermentation was pumped-over twice daily, with the temperature peaking at 90° F. Maceration time varied from 14 to 30 days, depending on wine lot. The wine was aged for 20 months in small French Oak barrels (33% new). Each lot was raked every 4 months before being bottled in August of 1998. The final blend is 82% Merlot and 18% Cabernet Franc. This wine is soft and approachable at release, but will gracefully age over the next 10 years.
- Wine Analysis:** 14.2 % alcohol • 3.58 pH • 5.9 g/l TA
- Tasting Notes:** Concentrated aromas of blackberry, ripe plum, and floral blueberry; perfumed with cedar, cocoa, subtle mint, and a touch of earthiness. The mouth is round and smooth - filled with plum/berry jam, currants, cherry, and a hint of black pepper. Balanced acidity and velvety tannins amplify the flavors on the palate and provide a long spicy finish of dried red fruits.
- Release date:** January 1, 1999
- Cases Produced:** 3511 cases

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