

2016 “I AM NOT DRINKING ANY \$%&*#! MERLOT”

It would seem to be a cold day in climate changed Santa Cruz that a Merlot would pass the portals of Bonny Doon Vineyard. And yet... one must (as painful a proposition as this might be) remain open to the possibility that the *The Cépage That Dare Not Speak Its Name* might (gasp) be somehow not just bearable, but in fact, utterly delicious – soft, luscious and plush (not in a slatternly way), well structured, and even, dare I say, reasonably complex. You may well be looking at me *sideways* for saying it, but I *will* be drinking some \$%&*#! Merlot.

TASTING NOTES

Good, deep ruby color, with a lovely dusty aroma of *fraise de bois*, licorice and gingerbread, with the subtlest suggestion of *garrigue de Provence*; the '16 vintage is a bit more substantial in weight and persistence than the '15. Quite elegant on the palate when first opened, the wine continues to build in amplitude in the glass with more air. The Merlot has wonderful natural acidity (go figure!), medium tannins and great persistence.

WINEMAKER NOTES

There has been to some extent a sort of “ethnic cleansing” of Merlot in the Central Coast since the release of the film, “Sideways,” and it is, of course, tremendously ironic to be singing the praises of this substantially execrated grape. But beauty is found sometimes in the most unexpected places.

FOOD PAIRING NOTES

This would be an absolutely perfect wine with lamb and rosemary. Other ideas include pizza with Italian sausage, grilled steak with a Merlot reduction, and grilled vegetables.



VITAL STATISTICS

Varietal Blend: 100% Merlot
Appellation: Monterey County
Alcohol by Volume: 14.5%
TA: 5.3 g/L
pH: 3.61
Production: 2,653 cases
Serving Temperature: 58° F
Cellaring: Drinkable upon release
(Sept. 2017), 3-5 years ageability

REGION Monterey County



WINEMAKER Randall Graham



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