



## MERLOT

*Sonoma County*

2023

<b>WINEMAKERS</b>	Olivia Wright
<b>ALCOHOL</b>	14.5%
<b>TA</b>	0.59g/100mL
<b>PH</b>	3.67
<b>APELLATION</b>	Sonoma County
<b>VARIETAL</b>	Merlot
<b>CELLAR &amp; FERMENTATION</b>	18 months in 100% French oak barrels, 25% new



## OUR STORY

We at Rodney Strong are united by our passion for crafting the highest quality wines from the very best vineyards across Sonoma County. With over 60 years of family ownership and 1158 acres of estate vineyards, we exemplify Cabernet and what it means to be world class Sonoma quality. We are united by our passion for Sonoma County, Cabernet Sauvignon and the belief that nothing brings people together better than sharing superb experiences with a great bottle of Rodney Strong wine.

## HISTORY

We've been growing Merlot since the early 1970s, when Rod Strong first planted it in Geyserville, the heart of Alexander Valley. Today we continue to farm Merlot in three estate vineyards in Alexander Valley, where it grows into grapes that display the deep dark fruit flavors and mature tannins typical of a warmer American Viticultural Area.

## THE VINTAGE AND VINEYARD

The 2023 vintage is not one we will soon forget. A cool and wet winter led to a budbreak 2-3 weeks later than average. Daytime temperatures throughout the growing season continued to be unusually cool, with averages in the low 70s and the warmest days just reaching into the mid 80s. This led to an exceptionally late harvest – over a full month later than 2022 on average, offering the grapes an extended hang time to develop extraordinary complexity and concentration. The evening coastal breezes reaching inwards to the Alexander Valley AVA preserved fresh acidity and created beautiful balance with the season's generous ripe fruit flavors.

## TASTING

Our 2023 Sonoma County Merlot is velvety soft with notes of sweet black cherry, boysenberry compote and cassis. Medium bodied with lush tannins, this wine boasts toasty oak and spice on the mid-palate punctuated by a full and lively finish. These luscious dark fruit and toasty flavors are enhanced by a kiss of new French oak. Enjoy this soft and elegant Merlot with grilled pork chops and cherry reduction, rosemary crusted lamb shanks or creamy polenta with a short rib ragu.

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SONOMA GROWN  
CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

Certified Sustainable Winery  
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