



DOMAINE CARNEROS.

2020 Avant-Garde Merlot



BLEND

100% Carneros Merlot
22 Months Barrel Aged in French oak, 57% new

ABOUT OUR AVANT-GARDE MERLOT

The Carneros area is planted overwhelmingly with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, at 51% and 44% of the total acreage, respectively. And this is not without good reason as the climate is ideal for these two grape varieties. However, Carneros is a special, if not magical, place for Merlot. A place where the grapes can hang deep into October, developing additional layers of ripeness without losing freshness or acidity. Gentle de-stemming (without crushing) treatment coaxed out the expression of this unique site of beautiful red clay - specifically in terms of its silky tannins which create a truly seamless wine. In addition, we hand sorted all the fruit selecting the best clusters while leaving behind anything that was less than perfect. We only produce it when the vintage is just right to allow plenty of hang time and true varietal expression.

HARVEST NOTES

The 2020 vintage is defined by low yields and concentrated, complex fruit. Early spring frosts and rain during May fruit set limited the number of berries per cluster, which allowed the vine to concentrate more of its resources towards each berry during development. Summer drought kept berries small while optimal temperatures throughout July and August ripened them beautifully. Fewer, smaller berries resulted in wonderfully concentrated flavor in both the fruit and the wines.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

This wine opens up beautifully within a few minutes of pouring into a glass. Aromas of raspberry and black cherry followed by tobacco leaf, saddle leather, and hot brick. On the palate one encounters notes of damson plum, baked cherry, and candied fruit. While this 2020 vintage shows well in its youth, additional cellar time up to 10 years is possible with its firm acidity and will allow this wine to uncoil in the bottle.

SUGGESTED PAIRINGS

Our winemaker suggests pairing the 2020 Avant-Garde Merlot with rich meats like grilled rib-eye and baby lamb chops, or also with classic French ratatouille.

TECHNICAL DATA

Appellation: Carneros
Harvest brix: 25.1°
Final pH: 3.51
TA: 0.59g/100ml
Alcohol: 14.7%

PRICE

\$35

Only 185 cases produced. Winery exclusive.

www.domainecarneros.com