

The header features a background image of a vineyard with green grapevines in the foreground and rolling hills under a blue sky with light clouds in the background. The text 'Merry Cellars' is written in a gold, cursive script at the top left. Below it, the word 'NEWSLETTER' is written in large, bold, dark red capital letters. A thin gold horizontal line is positioned above the word 'NEWSLETTER'.

Merry Cellars NEWSLETTER

January, 2022 / Vol.2

A MESSAGE FROM OUR WINEMAKER

Dear Friends and Family,

We hope the New Year is off to a great start for you and yours! Here at the winery, we have been busy finalizing our 2022 white wines and preparing them for bottling in the next several weeks (more on part of that process below). Overall, I expect that you will find all of our 2022 white wines (and Rosé) to be somewhat drier and brighter than previous vintages and they already have us daydreaming of enjoying a glass or two on a sundrenched patio!

In other news, many of you are aware that this week is our semi-annual Case Sale. If you have not already taken advantage of this opportunity, it's a great way to restock your cellars after the holidays! Stop by the tasting room or visit our website to save 50% on many of our wines www.merrycellars.com

Cheers,

Patrick R. Merry,
Founding Winemaker

P.S. Stay strong, Dry January is nearly over!

IN THIS ISSUE

- A Message From Our Winemaker
 - Cold Stabilization
 - In The Spotlight
 - Tasting Notes: 2019 Merlot
 - Upcoming Events!
 - Current Wines
-

COLD STABILIZATION

A stable wine is one for which, under normal storage conditions, there will be no change physically or sensorially in the time between bottling and drinking. This includes visual changes as well as those in mouthfeel, taste, and aroma. Through testing and trialing, we do our best to protect a wine's stability for a reasonable duration—but because it is impossible to know when someone will open a bottle, there is potential for some old wines to be quite changed upon opening, compared to when they were bottled.

The five areas of stability are oxidative, color, metal, protein, and tartrate. Protein stability is frequently referred to as heat stability; and when a wine is tartrate stable it is also known as cold stable. Our main focus today will be on this last type, cold stability.

The practice of ensuring a wine is cold stable is pretty simple: once blending is complete, the wine should be “crashed” to a temperature of at least 39°F for a minimum of four days. The walls and floor of the cold tank become coated in spiky, crystalized tartrates that have precipitated out of the wine and stuck to the steel.

The main components of this precipitate are potassium and calcium ions (KHT, potassium bitartrate, and CaT, calcium tartrate) which originated in the fruit during the growing season. This can indicate levels of potassium and calcium in the soil, water, and other aspects of the vineyard environment. Holding the wine in a cold state for an extended period is the best way to remove these compounds because their solubility decreases as temperature does—deeper cold means more precipitate fallout.

With hot water and elbow grease, this disposable material is washed down the drain, the tank is sanitized, and another wine is transferred in to begin its stabilization process.



Our practice at Merry is a bit more extreme than the mandatory: we hold the wine in an environment of 29-31°F for two weeks before moving it to a new vessel. We only do this with white and rosé wines, because we don't expect our red wines will ever be chilled deeply or for long enough to result in a tartrate precipitate in the bottle. Crystal formation of the tartrates can also be inhibited by other components such as protein, polysaccharides, and tannin. These high molecular weight compounds are usually more present in red wine, which is another reason why we don't worry too much about them being cold stable.

Rosé usually goes into stabilization first since we don't blend it with anything else—the blend of Mourvèdre and Syrah that we get on harvest day is what we put into the bottle! For the rest of the whites, though, the temp can't be turned down on the first one until all four are blended in their final form. This year the last cold stable wine intended for bottling will be finished at the end of March, so we have a ways to go! We expect to release the first whites of our 2022 vintage in the late spring... the anticipation is building!

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

2019 Merlot Stillwater Creek Vineyard

Ah, Merlot! While it may not be the sexiest of the red grapes, it may well be the most versatile. As the second most planted red winegrape in Washington State, Merlot finds its way into many of our favorite Northwest wines. Bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon? It probably has a bit of Merlot added. Bottle of any Bordeaux blend? It almost certainly was crafted with Merlot as a component!

Of course, Merlot as a single varietal is quite common, too. On its own, Merlot tends to provide a lot of rich, red fruit on the nose (think ripe black cherry and plum) with cocoa and, not uncommonly, herbal notes. With medium acidity, supple tannins and a plush mouthfeel, Merlot is usually more approachable than your average Cabernet Sauvignon which can make it an excellent wine to pair with more casual fare (think pizza night!) We recommend pairing Merlot with cheeses such as cheddar, Gouda and Swiss. Try alongside poultry and braised meats as well.

So, next time you're choosing a wine from the menu or shelf, don't just skip over Merlot – rather, grab a bottle, experiment and enjoy! You might be surprised at what this grape has to offer.

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Tasting Notes

Aroma

The top notes in the bouquet include rich, red fruit on the nose (think ripe black cherry and plum) with cocoa and, not uncommonly, herbal notes.

Flavor

Deep fruit flavors and refined tannins. Rich flavors are deftly balanced against a backdrop of toasty oak and sweet tobacco.

Mouthfeel

With medium acidity, supple tannins and a plush mouthfeel, Merlot tends to be somewhat more approachable than your average Cabernet Sauvignon.

Pairing Suggestions

Cheeses such as cheddar, Gouda and Swiss. Try alongside poultry and braised meats as well as stuffed mushrooms, chicken and veggie kabobs, pasta with cream sauce. Or save it for a more relaxed evening such a pizza & movie night!



*Come be a part
of our story.*



UPCOMING EVENTS

2/15-2/18

First Quarter

Wine Club Allocation

(featuring our 2019 Mourvedre-Syrah)

4/14-4/15

Rosé Release!

6/17

Rosé 5K Fun Run

[Click Here To Learn More](#)

CURRENT WINES

White Wines

2019 Semillon

Cases in stock: 33

2020 Semillon

Cases in stock: 80

2021 Chardonnay

Cases in stock: 49

2021 Roussanne

Cases in stock: 45

2021 Viognier

Cases in stock: 17

[Click Here To Learn More](#)

Red Wines

2019 Merlot

Cases in stock: 137

2018 Syrah

Cases in stock: 24

2020 Crimson

Cases in stock: 219

2019 Petit Verdot

Cases in stock: 42

2019 Silhouette

Cases in stock: 266

2020 Sangiovese

Cases in stock: 56