

**WEST COAST MERLOTS MERLOTS**  
**The Cellar Society of San Francisco**  
**September 15, 2018**      **West Coast Merlots**

**BLIND TASTING WINES**

|          | Wine Description  | Bottle # | Group Rank | Points    | My Rank | Reviews  |
|----------|---|----------|------------|-----------|---------|--|
| <b>A</b> | <b>2014 Robert Keenan Merlot, Mailbox Spring,Mtn Reserve Napa</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>72</b> |         | <p>Black cherry, spicebox, mid-to-full bodied, Rich. Drink now.</p> <p><b><u>Vinous, Sept, 2017 VN 94</u></b></p> <p>The 2014 Merlot Reserve Mailbox Vineyard is plump, juicy and inviting. Dark stone fruit, tobacco and leather are sketched in broad strokes. Pliant and open-knit, the 2014 will drink well pretty much upon release. This, too, is very nicely done. The Merlot Reserve Mailbox Vineyard emerges from estate vineyards on Spring Mountain. -AG -</p> <p><b><u>Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, December 2016 WA 93</u></b></p> <p>The 2014 Merlot Reserve Mailbox Vineyard has traditionally been one of the top Merlots made in Northern California. Beautiful deep black cherry and blackcurrant fruit with some spice box and earth jump from the glass of this dense ruby/plum colored wine. It is rich, medium to full-bodied, pure, textured and serious. This is a beauty to drink over the next 12-15 years. -</p> <p><b><u>\$69.94 at JJBuckley</u></b></p>  |
| <b>B</b> | <b>2014 Shafer Vineyards Merlot, Napa</b>                         | <b>3</b> | <b>1</b>   | <b>63</b> |         | <p>Wine Spectator Cellar Selection. Chocolate, plum, black fruit, rich and full, Drink now.</p> <p><b><u>WineEnthusiast June 2017 WE 93</u></b></p> <p>Cellar Selection. Tart black cherry meets plum, strawberry and clove, while softened tannins belie the wine's overall density and sense of generosity. A smoky waft of cigar amplifies the power and sinewy nature of the... +</p> <p><b><u>Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, October 2016 WA 92</u></b></p> <p>Shafer also makes one of the better Merlots. The 2014 Merlot includes 8% Cabernet Sauvignon and is a beauty. Mocha and chocolaty notes intermixed with red cherry, plum and blacker fruits jump from the glass of this... +</p> <p><b><u>Antonio Galloni's Vinous, December 2016 AG 91</u></b></p> <p>Dark red cherry, plum, spice, menthol, licorice and gravel are beautifully delineated in Shafer's 2014 Merlot. This is a somewhat brisk, linear style, but it works nicely. Savory overtones add aromatic intensity and lift.</p> <p><b><u>\$55 at JJBuckley</u></b></p> |

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| <b>C</b> | <b>Wine description</b><br><br><b>2014 Wine of Substance Me Merlot, Stoneridge Columbia Valley, WA</b> | <b>Bottle #</b><br><br>2 | <b>Group Rank</b><br><br>6 | <b>Points</b><br><br>91 | <b>My rank</b><br><br> | <p>Dried cherries, mid-to-full bodied, leather, bright structured fruit, long finish. Needs a decant.</p> <p><b><u>Robert Parker 6/17 WA 94</u></b></p> <p>Another sensational Merlot is the 2014 Merlot Stoneridge Vineyard, which also comes from the Wahluke Slope AVA in the middle of the state. This is a warm (hot) and dry terroir that consists of sandy loam and gravelly...</p> <p><b><u>Antonio Galloni Oct 2017 VN 91</u></b></p> <p>from river rock soil featuring broken boulders; aged in 45% new oak, almost entirely Boutes Grand Reserve barrels: Bright, dark red-ruby. Sexy rose petal lift to the aromas of currant, black cherry, and dark chocolate.</p> <p><b><u>\$35 at JJ Buckley (only online seller)</u></b></p>  |
| <b>D</b> | <b>2014 DeLille Cellars D2, Woodinville, WA</b>  | 8                        | 8                          | 96                      |                        | <p>D2 is sourced from a "who's who" list of Washington state vineyards, capturing the state's terroir in a timeless blend that is one of our founding wines first made in 1992</p> <p><b><u>Robert Parker WA 95</u></b></p> <p><b><u>\$43.99 at Total Wine</u></b></p>   |
| <b>E</b> | <b>2014 Leonetti Cellars Merlot Columbia Valley, WA</b>  | 5                        | 4                          | 81                      |                        | <p><b><u>Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, June 2016 WA 93</u></b></p> <p>A soft, sexy and luxuriously textured red, the 2014 Walla Walla Merlot (there's 6% Cabernet Franc in the blend) is loaded with perfectly ripe notes of black currants, lead pencil shavings, charred earth and chocolate. Full-bodied and possessing a wealth of fruit, you have to hunt for the tannin, but they're there; still, fruit and texture are the name of the game here. The baby fat should slowly melt away and it should have 15 years or more of longevity-</p> <p><b><u>Wine Spectator, May 2016 WS 91</u></b></p> <p>Dense, with cherry and herbal overtones wrapped in firm, fine, peppery tannins, swerving into a long, expressive finish. Needs time to soften the edges. Best from 2018 through 2023. — H.S.</p> <p><b><u>\$78.94 at JJ Buckley</u></b></p> |

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|----------|---|----------|------------|--------|---------|--|
| <b>F</b> | <b>2014 Pedestal Merlot<br/>Columbia Valley, WA</b>           | 6        | 5          | 82     |         | <p><b><u>Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, June 2017 WA 95</u></b></p> <p>I loved the 2014 Pedestal Merlot and it's 81% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Malbec and 2% Petit Verdot. It offers a downright voluptuous and incredibly sexy style in its ripe blackcurrants, toasted spice, chocolate and licorice aromas and flavors. Broad, expansive, layered and pleasure bent, with ripe tannin, it's a knockout Merlot that's going to have 10-15 years of drinkability. - Jeb Dunnuck -</p> <p><b><u>Vinous, October 2017 ST 92</u></b></p> <p>Bright dark red. Complex aromas of cherry, tobacco, milk chocolate and licorice, plus a suggestion of iron-oxide minerality. Very suave and filled in but not at all heavy, with the lively red fruit and floral flavors... +</p> <p><b><u>Wine Enthusiast, November 2017 WE 91</u></b></p> <p>This wine opens with pleasing cocoa, dark raspberry and graphite aromas. The palate offers medium-bodied, tart fruit flavors cinched with tannin. A big, bold interpretation of Merlot. <b><u>\$49.00 at JJBuckley</u></b></p> |
| <b>G</b> | <b>2015 Duckhorn Merlot<br/>Three Palms Vineyard<br/>Napa</b> | 1        | 2          | 70     |         | <p><b><u>Follow up to the Wine Spectator #1 wine of 2017</u></b>, Hedonistic, round, age-worthy, needs time. Since their inaugural vintage in 1978, Duckhorn Vineyards has been proud to craft a vineyard-designate bottling from Three Palms. One of California's first single-vineyard Merlots, this full-bodied wine reflects Three Palms' unique terroir and has been a consistent benchmark for New World Merlot. Named for its three iconic palm trees, the warm, up valley vineyard features lean soils that cause the vines to send their roots deep in search of nutrients, producing an intense, age-worthy wine with complex fruit and mineral layers.</p> <p><b><u>\$89 at JJ Buckley, \$98 at Duckhorn</u></b></p>  |
| <b>H</b> | <b>2014 Duckhorn Merlot, Napa</b>                             | 4        | 7          | 93     |         | <p><b><u>92 Wine Spectator</u></b> Plush and rich-tasting, with finely interwoven flavors of dark cherry, plum tart and blackberry accented by cocoa powder notes. Varietal Content: 88% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc; Cooperage: 100% French Oak Château-style Barrels (60 Gallons), Barrel Aging: 16 Months, Age of Barrels: 40% New, 60% Neutral</p> <p><b><u>\$42.99 at Total Wine, Unavailable at Duckhorn</u></b></p>   |

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|----------|--|-------|---|
| <b>W</b> | <b>2013 St Supery Vineyards Merlot Rutherford , Napa</b> |       | <p><b><u>92 Wine Spectator, November 2016</u></b><br/> Richness meets good structure in this polished Merlot. Aromas of cherry and dark chocolate lead to layered flavors of plum and orange zest. Drink now through 2027. 1,510 cases made. –TF<br/> <b><u>\$39.94 at JJ Buckley</u></b></p>   |
| <b>X</b> | <b>2011 Woodward Canyon Merlot Columbia Valley, WA</b>   |       | <p>Sappy, juicy red fruit, intensity, old world lighter texture and weightless, Drink now.<br/> <b><u>92 Robert Parker WA</u></b><br/> <b><u>\$34.94 at JJBuckley</u></b></p>   |
| <b>Y</b> | <b>2016 Sky Terrace Vineyard's Merlot CC County</b>      |       | <p>100% Merlot, grown and bottled in Danville, California. Fruit forward, slow rich finish. Fermented with D254, and in barrel aged in French Oak barrels for 9 months.<br/> <b><u>Silver Medal</u></b><br/> <b><u>International Homewinemakers Competitive Judging, 2017-183 entries,</u></b><br/> <b><u>Priceless</u></b></p>   |
| <b>Z</b> | <b>2014 Ridge Vineyards Merlot Santa Cruz Mountains</b>  |       | <p>Aromatic, fresh, strong acidity, black cherry. Drink now or age for decades<br/> <b><u>Antonio Galloni's Vinous, August 2017 92</u></b><br/> 2017Ridge's 2014 Merlot Estate possesses notable purity of fruit, brilliant aromatic presence and fabulous balance. Pliant, open-knit and super-expressive, Ridge's Merlot is a terrific choice for readers who are just starting to get to know the Ridge wines, as it can be enjoyed with minimal cellaring. What a joy it is to taste the 2014 today. Sadly, there will be no 2015, as yields were punishingly low. -<br/> <b><u>jebdunnuck.com, August 2017 JD 91</u></b><br/> Also inky colored, the 2014 Merlot Estate (100% Merlot) offers lots of ripe black cherry, white chocolate, espresso roast, and licorice in a supple, seamless style. It's much more approachable than the Estate Cabernet and is ideal for drinking anytime over the coming decade. There's 1,700 cases. -<b><u>\$44 at JJ Buckley</u></b></p> |