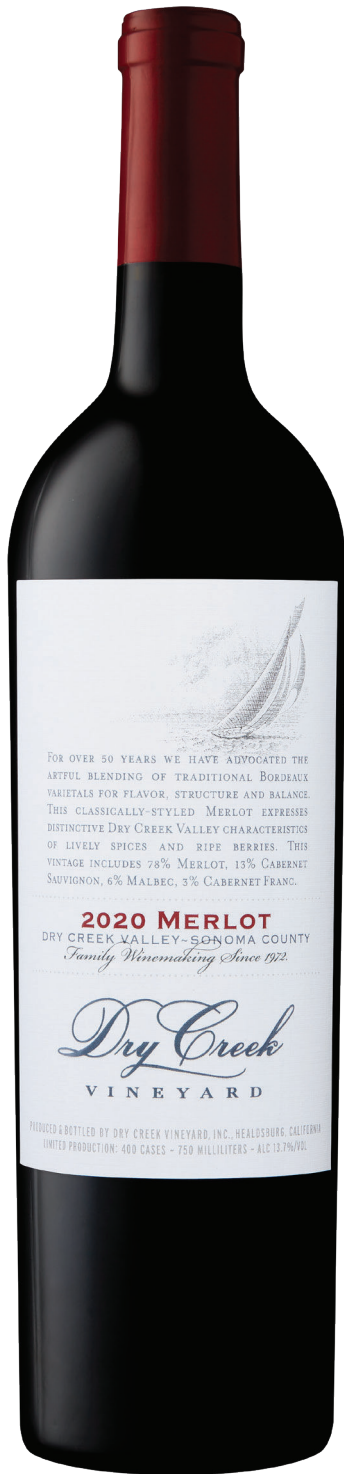




## 2020 MERLOT

Dry Creek Valley



### HISTORY

Our first vintage of Merlot was released in 1974, and we have produced this classic Bordeaux varietal ever since. In fact, the Dry Creek Vineyard 1991 Reserve Merlot won the prestigious “Grand Prix d’Honneur” at the 1995 Challenge International Du Vin in Bordeaux, France – much to the surprise of the French! This delicious varietal is outstanding as a dominant variety with its bright aromatics and a velvety mouthfeel, and is also a great blending component for our Bordeaux program.

### GROWING SEASON

The fall and winter rains of the 2020 season were slightly below average, but spring rains helped to increase the total rainfall. Heat waves in mid-August and the first week of September set off a fast-paced early stretch of harvest. Nature dealt some unexpected cards with the Walbridge Fire in August, in a remote forested area, and the Glass Fire in September, located on the eastern side of Sonoma County. Ever focused on quality, our winemaking team implemented an intensive plan for evaluating grapes prior to harvesting. After detailed analysis of each block within each vineyard, we were proud to produce beautifully structured, complex and delicious wines from the challenging vintage.

### WINEMAKER COMMENTS

In our 2020 vintage, aromas of black cherry, boysenberry and blackberry immediately fill the senses. A few more moments reveal notes of cedar, baking spices and toffee. The palate is full of wonderful complexity, combining flavors of plum with deep undertones of leather, bay leaf and dark chocolate. This beautiful wine has excellent structure and balance with a lush, round quality that lingers.

### BLEND

78% Merlot  
13% Cabernet Sauvignon  
6% Malbec  
3% Cabernet Franc

### FERMENTATION

11-14 days in fermenters at 82–88°F;  
pumped over twice daily

### BARREL AGING

19 months in French & Hungarian oak;  
41% new oak

ALCOHOL | 13.7%

BRIX | 24.1

PH | 3.64

TA | 6.2 g/L

### HARVEST DATES

September 10–25, 2020

VINE AGE | 10–25 years

### SOILS

Low vigor, gravelly, iron-rich

### YIELDS

4–6 tons per acre

### PREVIOUS VINTAGE

92  
POINTS

Wine & Spirits

90  
POINTS

Wine Spectator