



2012 Point Concepción “Czar & Rey” Merlot Santa Barbara County

In the 2004 movie, “Sideways”, 99% of viewers missed a bit of the satire. The relic bottle of 1961 Cheval Blanc the main character Miles zealously hoards, was/is a Merlot blend. Clever irony aside however, his statement that, “I’m not drinking any f*#*ing Merlot!”, had a powerful and immediate effect, causing a precipitous drop in sales and planted acreage of Merlot. But, there was also a positive effect for Merlot wine. Merlot plantings and vineyards went through a harsh, survival of the fittest selection process. Overpriced, overproduced, “plonk” Merlot is gone. Merlot grown in poor quality vineyards and from poor regions was quickly removed. Only the best vineyards and grapes remain, with a very dramatic increase in the quality of remaining Merlot wines for consumers.

Tasting Notes:

Color: Opaque. Dark ruby.

Bouquet: Cherries, tobacco, sweet spices.

Flavor: Full bodied, but extremely soft and supple. Red and black cherry, spicy plum. Ripe flavors, with cherry chocolate character, showing deep Merlot varietal quality, seamless spicy blueberry and currant flavors that define Merlot varietal character. Think Bordeaux Right Bank or ripe Chinon. The varietal character of this wine pleasingly envelopes your palate like an old friend.

Pairings: Delicious alone, but pairs well with beef, pork, lamb and fowl.

Alcohol Content: 14.5%

Serving Temperature: 55-60°F.

Production: 5,900 750 ml bottles.

Vineyard and Vinification Details:

Vineyard: This wine is not vineyard designated. However it is 100% Camp 4 Vineyard Merlot from the Santa Ynez Valley, from the single, small, high quality block of merlot remaining at the vineyard.

Elevation: 684 feet above sea level.

Trellising: Guyot.

Vine Age: 11 years old.

Yield: 9,000 lbs. per acre.

Soils: Well drained sandy loam and gravel loam.

Viticulture: Vertical shoot positioned canopy, leaf and shoot thinned manually.

Vinification: 100% destemmed, whole berry fermented in open top, chilled jacketed stainless steel fermenters.

Aging Process: Aged in small French oak barrels. 15% new barrels, the balance were 1, 2 and 3 year old barrels. Inoculated for Malolactic fermentation to prevent formation of histamines.