

Club d'Oro

Famiglia Cotarella Sodale Merlot Lazio 2015

Retail: \$18

Alcohol: 14%

Brothers Riccardo and Renzo Cotarella are giants in Italian winemaking. Riccardo is a legendary oenologist and the consulting winemaker for more than 50 wineries in Italy and France! His brother, Renzo, oversees all winemaking operations for Antinori, one of the titans in Italian wine. Their family project, Famiglia Cotarella features noble varietals merlot, cabernet sauvignon, and sangiovese. Sodale, derived from the Italian word for solidarity, is composed of merlot coming from two sites in Lazio, north of Rome. The soil, sediment with a healthy dollop of clay, is absolutely perfect for merlot.

The 2015 Sodale is intensely red in the glass. The bouquet offers notes of red fruit and sweet spices that blend in a perfect balance with vanilla wood notes. Round and plush on the palate, it fills the mouth and delivers a fantastic and persistent finish. There's a lot to love here. It is drinking well now and will be the perfect accompaniment with hearty fare.

Y Rousseau Merlot P  p   2018

Retail: \$45

Alcohol: 14.2%

Yannick Rousseau hails from Gascony in the South-West of France. He immigrated to the US to take a position with famed Napa estate Newton Winery in 1999 and later took a winemaking position with Chateau Potelle on Mount Veeder. In 2008, Yannick and his wife Susan began their own project, Y Rousseau Wines, with a line-up that ranges from colombar (a native French varietal) to merlot. The P  p   bottling is a tribute to his grandfather who absolutely loved merlot. The fruit for this release comes from two different vineyards: one on Mt. Veeder and the other over in Stag's Leap in the foothills of the Vaca Range.

2018 is a stunning vintage! It has all the attributes that make Napa Valley one of the best places in the world to grow merlot. The P  p   2018 showcases the excellent growing and ripening conditions of 2018. The nose is precise, complex, deep, generous with plenty of finesse and delivers a m  lange of black cherries, cedar and fresh cacao. The mouthfeel has energy, is juicy and inviting with savory notes, dark berries, and elegant tannins with a long and balanced finish.

Januik Merlot Columbia Valley 2016

Retail: \$22

Alcohol: 14.4%

Mike and Carolyn Januik launched this winery in 1999. Previously they had owned a wine shop in Ashland, Oregon, which they sold so Mike could learn winemaking at UC Davis. More than 20 years later, they are producing wines that are distinctive and delicious! The merlot is sourced from some of the most sought-after in Washington, including Klipsun and Champoux. There is also a small amount of cab included for more structure and power.

This supple, medium-bodied wine shows layers of black cherry, boysenberry and plum notes in the nose that translate into fleshy black fruit and chocolate flavors in the mouth. Brimming with a tremendous amount of texture and length, this wine should age gracefully for a minimum of 10-15 years.