

# CLOS LACHANCE

VINEYARDS

## 2017 ESTATE MERLOT

Merlot has often been an afterthought in the wine world, comfortably sitting behind the main stay of Cabernet Sauvignon. At Clos LaChance we bring Merlot to the forefront and give it the attention and dedication that it deserves and longs for. The Central Coast of California is a premier growing region for varietals like Merlot that thrive in more moderate climates and cooler temperatures. Merlot's original home, in the Bordeaux region of France, has cool nights and mild afternoon temperatures –much like the Central Coast. Aged in Premium French Oak the Clos LaChance Estate Merlot is medium bodied with bright fruit notes coupled with earthy undertones.

### HARVEST NOTES

In 2017 winemakers and vineyard owners rejoiced in unison from the ideal weather at bud break in the spring, right through perfect ripening temperatures through October and until the last grape was harvested. The winter prior to the 2017 growing season was wet and supplied well above average rain fall to drench the soil profile and create an optimal environment for a fruitful 2017 season. The rain subsided in early spring allowing the vines to dry out and utilize the full water profiles in the soil to gain great early season vigor. Perfect temperatures through fruit set and into the summer allowed for higher than average yields and more clusters on the vine than had been seen in the previous 3 vintages. Warm late summer temperatures gave us long hang time and perfectly ripened grapes on the vine. 2017 will go down as an above average year for yields and a well above average year for quality.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

The Clos LaChance Estate Merlot is handpicked and hand sorted prior to being destemmed, without crushing, then cold soaked for a full 72 hours. The Merlot is then inoculated where it enjoys a lengthy 2 week fermentation allowing for the utmost extraction of the tannins and color pigments which are held so tightly in the thick and dark grape skins. Post fermentation the wines are pressed gently in an air bladder press and transferred to oak for its lengthy aging process. The wine is aged for 16 months on 20% New French Oak and 10% New American oak, with the remainder being made up of primarily French Neutral oak. The marriage of American and French Oak works best on the Merlot variety as it brings out the bright red fruits and vanilla from the French Oak and promoting the earthy and spicy elements of the American Oak.

### TASTING NOTES

**Color:** Dark Red and slightly to not opaque

**Aroma:** Cola, Blackberry, Dried Herbs and Cocoa

**Structure:** Medium Tannins, Medium to High Acid, Medium to Heavy Bodied

**Flavors:** Cola, Dried Cherries, Tea Leaf and Chocolate

**Pairings:** Mushroom Risotto, Seared Ahi with Garlic Mashed Potatoes

### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

**Vineyard:** 100% Estate Vineyards

**Blend:** 85% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc

**Aged:** 16 months on 25% New French Oak 10% New American Oak and 65% Neutral French and American Oak

**Harvest Date:** Sept. 11 – Sept. 22, 2017

**Average Brix at Harvest:** 24.5

**pH:** 3.60

**TA:** 0.67

**Bottling Date:** July 23, 2019

**Alcohol %:** 14.5%

**Sugar:** 0.20 g/L

