

2016 Billy K Estate Merlot



Deep ruby in color, this wine is bursting with the flavors of black cherry, currants and mocha. It has a mouth-coating spicy richness, and a beautiful balance of acidity and well-integrated tannins. Billy K Merlot is from an estate block dedicated to Richard Alfaro's late father-in-law and friend William "Billy K" Kempker. The label is taken from a treasured family photo featuring a young Bill, sport fishing off the Gulf of Mexico in the 1950's.

The Vineyard

Ryan Spencer Vineyard, named after the Alfaro's son, was planted in 2001. It is comprised of 7 acres broken into 6 different blocks on a very steep hill between 450 and 800 feet in elevation. **Billy K** block is planted to one acre of Merlot divided between clones 343, 347 and 181. **Grandma & Grandpa's** blocks are located on the lower part of the hill and is planted to 4 different Dijon clones of Chardonnay and Pommard clones 4 & 5 Pinot Noir. **La Escalera** is a terraced hillside block planted to Hermitage clones of Syrah. On the top of the hill is **Mrs. K's** block. It is planted to Syrah clones 470, 877 and 174 with a vine density of over 2300 vines per acre.

The Winemaking

The grapes were harvested on September 22, 2016. The wine was made from 100% whole berries. The grapes were placed into small open-topped fermenters; the must was chilled to 50 degrees Fahrenheit and cold soaked for five days. Fermentation occurred via indigenous yeasts. Punch downs were performed 3 times a day during fermentation. After fermentation, the wine was pressed off directly into French oak barrels where it underwent spontaneous malo-lactic fermentation and was aged for 17 months on the lees. The wine was bottled without fining or filtration on January 29, 2018.

Production	97 cases	Release Date	February 2020
Alcohol	13.5 % by vol.	Aging	17 months in French oak barrels 50% new)
Bottle Size	750 ml & 1.5 L	Suggested Retail	\$35 & \$75