

MERRIAM

VINEYARDS

Merriam Vineyards At A Glance

The Merriam Vineyards Winery and Tasting room offers an east meets west experience in the melting pot of three major California appellations (Russian River Valley, Dry Creek Valley, and Alexander Valley). The tasting room invites visitors to cross cultures, as they taste California-crafted Bordeaux-style wines in a tasting room designed to reflect the comfort and warmth of a New England-style home.

A Cultural Blend – A Brief History of Merriam Vineyards

- Peter and Diana Merriam first envisioned a French-style winery in the United States during their honeymoon in France, where they were struck by the rich culture of food and wine and the seamless quality between life and work among French vigneron.
- After more than a five-year search for the perfect vineyard with pedigree, they purchased Windacre in 2000 and began blending French-style wines in the Russian River Valley.
- As of March 2009, Merriam Vineyards is proud to introduce their new winery and tasting room on the warmest edge of the Russian River Valley, where visitors are invited to cross cultures, as they taste California-crafted Bordeaux-style wines in a tasting room designed to reflect the comfort and warmth of a New England-style home.

Warmest Edge of the Russian River Valley

- Windacre lies in the warmest corner of the appellation, where neighboring wineries are world-renowned for zinfandel, syrah, petite sirah, and other sturdy red wine varieties. A climate strikingly similar to the Bordeaux region in France makes Windacre perfectly suited to grow exquisite merlot and other Bordeaux grape varieties.

Vineyards & Grower Partners

- The 11-acre Merriam Estate “Windacre Vineyard” rests on a glacial riverbed that has given it unique soil compositions that translates into the complexity of the wines.
- One of the oldest vineyards in Sonoma County, Windacre was originally planted in 1890. However, it wasn’t until 1980 that the unique qualities of the property were considered for Bordeaux varietal wines, and merlot was planted.
- Since acquiring Windacre in 2000, Peter Merriam has taken the first step in creating blends with true vineyard character by complementing the merlot vines with cabernet franc, petit verdot, and cabernet sauvignon.

- Windacre Vineyard has approximately six different clones, between petit verdot, cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon, and merlot, and two different merlot and cabernet sauvignon rootstocks.
- The Merriam Vineyard Bordeaux blend will be among the few California blends sourced 100% from a single vineyard site – in other words, the true blending of Merriam estate wines begins in the estate Windacre Vineyard.
- Merriam Vineyards partners with some of the most highly esteemed growers throughout Sonoma County, selecting the best vineyard sites to complement their estate grapes.
 - Passalacqua Block 21, Dry Creek Valley
 - Jones Vineyard, Dry Creek Valley
 - Simoneau Vineyard, Alexander Valley

Winegrowing Philosophy

- Upon purchasing Windacre in 2000, Peter Merriam instituted new ecological farming practices, including:
 - Reduction of pesticides
 - Composting of all stems and pumas
 - Cultivation of cover crops to revitalize the soil
- Los Amigos Vineyard was established as certified organic at the outset.
- The Merriams have established wetlands on the Los Amigos property that recycle 100% of winery wastewater to be reused for vineyard irrigation.

Winemaking

- In the less-is-better tradition of winemaking, Merriam Vineyard wines are crafted with minimal intervention in the winemaking process.
- Extreme care is taken with every step — harvest is done by hand, and the grapes are hand-delivered to small fermenters. After fermentation, the wine goes into medium-toast, 100% French oak barrels, where it is racked throughout the year on what is known as a Bordeaux schedule — three or four times in the first year and twice in the second year. (Racking is a labor-intensive process, and most new world wineries tend to rack less frequently.)
- Keith Meitz, former winemaker for Merriam Vineyards, blended the 2000-2006 vintages.
- UC Davis graduate Winemaker Margaret Davenport, with 22 years of experience crafting Sonoma County wines, joined Merriam Vineyards in time to blend the 2006 and 2007 vintages, with the 2008 vintage being her first from vine to bottle.

Merriam Vineyards Current Vintage Wines

- 2005 Windacre Russian River Valley Merlot
- 2004 Block 21 Dry Creek Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2005 Block 21 Dry Creek Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2005 Dunnsden Russian River Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
- 2005 Miktos Russian River Valley
- 2006 Windacre Cabernet Franc
- 2006 Jones Vineyard Cabernet Franc
- 2008 Simoneau Ranch Alexander Valley Chardonnay