

From: Debbie debbie@santiamwine.com
Subject: Great Merlot tasting Dinner: Chicken Parmesan w/fried polenta
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To: bwelsh@mind-over-media.com



Good Evening, You are invited to join us for a great tasting of Merlot on Friday, January 24th from 4-8 PM

I was hoping to find Merlot from around the globe. Instead we are tasting great Merlot from Washington and California.

Dinner Special: Mary's Organic Chicken Parmesan with fried Polenta

Salad special: Smoked Salmon Caesar

MERLOT 101. Merlot, which in French means The Little Blackbird, is the second most popular red grape in America. It is believed that the first time the grape was used in making wine was in the late 1700s when a French winemaker in the Bordeaux region formally labeled the grape as an ingredient in his Bordeaux wine blend. From this moment on, the grape spread across Bordeaux and became known for its unique ability to add softness and luscious fruit to a wine when it was combined with the region's favorite grape, Cabernet Sauvignon. The combination of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot complemented each other so well, that the pair became the main ingredients for the world-renowned Bordeaux blend, now coveted by the majority of the world's wine drinkers.

Full pour \$40 half pour \$22

The Wines:

2017 Leonetti Merlot Walla Walla, WA. \$104 Mostly Merlot with 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2017 Walla Walla Merlot begins with a black-fruited nose but quickly moves to express red fruit on the palate. The wine is precise, with hints of pencil shavings and juicy plum, while the Cabernet expression lifts the back end with subtle spices. Medium to full-bodied, the wine ends with a long-lingering finish that delivers pleasure and complexity. This is a tasty and gorgeous Merlot, of which there were. **93 Points Wine Advocate**

2015 Long Shadows Pedestal Merlot, Columbia Valley \$68 The 2015 Pedestal Merlot is a rich, dramatic wine that wafts from the glass with aromas of black cherries, crème de cassis, cigar tobacco and mocha. On the palate, it's broad, full-bodied and lavish, with ripe, generously oak-inflected flavors and an ample core of fruit, structured by fine-grained but youthfully chewy tannins, concluding with a sweet, spicy and somewhat heady finish. The most exotic and expressive wine in the Long Shadows range, it's crafted by Michel Rolland. **94 Points Robert Parker**

2016 Duckhorn Cellars Napa Valley Merlot \$40 Production Notes Varietal Content: 77% Merlot, 22% Cabernet Sauvignon, .5% Malbec, .5 % Petit Verdot; Cooperage: 100% French Oak; Age of Barrels: 40% New, 60% Neutral Winemaker Notes The 2016 growing season yielded a beautifully complex expression of Napa Valley Merlot, with inviting aromas of fresh black raspberry, vanilla, tea leaves, pie crust and licorice. On the palate, luxurious red-fruit flavors of strawberry, plum, Bing cherry and loganberry are supported by silky tannins and a bright, mouthwatering acidity that carries the wine to a lingering finish, with hints of maple, cedar and sweet spice.

2015 Hook & Ladder Merlot Los Amigos Ranch, Sonoma County \$30 Deep Garnet in color with notes of clove and cedar highlight the bouquet of this Merlot. A complex palate of juicy raspberries and mocha with very light tannins leads to a lingering cherry spice finish.

2017 Basel Cellars Merlot Columbia Valley \$22 Complex fruit from Double Canyon Vineyard makes up the majority of our Merlot blend. The nose reveals hints of raspberry, rhubarb and rose pedal with nuances of warm oak in the background. Intriguing notes of ripe stone fruits, lavender and pomegranate gives the aroma definite layers and great distinction. The roundness and balance of the mid-plate remind me of the traditional right bank Bordeaux's that also possess much needed acidity, and in this case framing the wine very well

2015 Bootleg Red Blend Napa Valley \$45 The 2015 Red Blend is made up of 53% Merlot, 21% Petite Sirah, 20% Syrah, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot, aged 20 months in 28% new French oak and 2% new American oak. Deep garnet-purple colored, baked plums, warm blackberries and Black Forest cake springs from the glass with touches of Chinese five spice, dusty soil and garrigue with a touch of

black tea. Full, rich and with an approachable chewy texture, it has great freshness and a long earthy finish. **90**
Points Wine Spectator

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