

**Ackerly Pond Vineyards****2004 Merlot
(North Fork of Long Island)**

Over the past decade plus, there has been an interesting phenomena in Long Island wine. Whether it's a coincidence or a trend is anyone's guess. It seems that even numbered years tend to be cooler or slightly lesser vintages while the odd years, including the well-regarded 1995, 2001 and 2005 years, shine. Of course this isn't a hard and fast rule. And it certainly doesn't mean that there aren't terrific wines in the cooler years. In fact, some of the most underrated wines - both red and white - that I've tasted lately have come out of the 2004 vintage, a slightly cooler, but still typical local year.

Ackerly Pond Vineyards 2004 Merlot (\$25) is by far the finest wine I've tasted in the portfolio. A bright, aromatic nose offers layers of black cherry, blackberry, smoky oak black pepper and vanilla aromas. Ripe and flavorful, it's medium bodied with intense blackberry flavors accented by dark chocolate, vanilla and sweet oak. With little more structure, this would be a standout, but it's still a beautifully elegant red that will shine best on the dinner table.

Reviewed September 5, 2007 by [Lenn Thompson](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Ackerly Pond Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2004

Wine: Merlot

Appellation: [North Fork of Long Island](#)

Grape: Merlot

Price: \$25.00

THE REVIEWER**Lenn Thompson**

Lenn Thompson writes about New York wines for *Dan's Papers*, *Long Island Press*, *Long Island Wine Gazette*, *Edible East End* and *Hamptons.com*. Two words describe his taste in wine — *balance* and *nuance*.

Lenn prefers food-friendly, elegant wines to jammy, over-extracted fruit bombs and heavy-handed oak. When reviewing, Lenn tastes each wine three times — alone right after opening, with food, and again the next day — believing that 90-second reviews are unrealistic and not how the average person enjoys wine.