

**Bedell Cellars****2005 Reserve Merlot  
(North Fork of Long Island)**

Long Island's 2005 vintage was one for the record books. Some vineyard locations received 17 inches of rain over an eight-day period. An eight-day period that happened to coincide with the grape harvest. Most of the white grapes had come in already, but most reds had not. That is definitely a lot of rain - especially after a summer where we endured near drought conditions (less than two inches over three months). Those conditions led to smaller-than-usual fruit and some of the most intense fruit ripeness in Long Island's short wine-producing history. Those 17 inches of rain wreaked havoc and several vineyards sustained a lot of damage. But, those lucky enough to survive or patient enough to wait for everything to dry out will soon be releasing some of the region's best reds ever.

In fact, Bedell Cellars has already released its 2005 Reserve Merlot (\$40). And, despite its youth, the intensity of the vintage demands attention. Loads of blackberry preserve, fresh fig, and cafe mocha aromas reach right up out of the glass and pull you in. Big, lush blackberry flavors fill the mouth, with rich chocolate and a little vanilla in the background. The extracted, broad flavors carry through from beginning to end. The structure is a little firm and this wine is very full-bodied for the region. The finish is lengthy, if just slightly astringent. I expect the tannins to mellow, revealing layers of complexity and deliciousness rarely seen on the North Fork. In three to five years, when other wineries are just releasing their 05s, this wine could be a classic.

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

---

**THE WINE**

**Winery:** Bedell Cellars

**Vintage:** 2005

**Wine:** Reserve Merlot

**Appellation:** North Fork of Long Island

**Grape:** Merlot

**Price:** \$40.00

**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.