

**Domenico Wines****2004 Merlot, Riverview Ranch
(Napa Valley)**

If you're going to make Merlot, you might as well make a big one while you're at it. And if you're going to source it from Napa, it darn well better be something of stature, of structure and of heft. This one fits the bill. Not only is the Merlot fruit quite fine and full-bodied, but the addition of Cabernet and Petite Verdot give it additional heft. The Malbec adds some nice smokiness to all those wonderful tack shop aromas and flavours

that you want in a fine Napa Bordeaux.

Made whole berry fermentation style in small open top fermentors, the wine was hand punched down 2 to 3 times daily and aged 11 months in French and American oak. This wine's aromas explode with fine country club classiness, rich with tobacco, leather, plum, bell pepper and black pepper, and reeking of sophistication with a hint of violets.

The flavours don't disappoint, with enormous floods of plum jam, dark cherries and crab apple. This wine keeps increasing in volume as you enjoy it, much like a good Mozart symphony, practically grabbing your palate and wrestling it to the ground. It so wants big foods like leg of lamb, rich meaty pasta dishes or triple crème Gorgonzola pizza with fig jam and caramelized onions. Give the wine what it wants and nobody gets hurt.

Reviewed February 20, 2008 by [Laura Ness](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Domenico Wines](#)

Vineyard: Riverview Ranch

Vintage: 2004

Wine: Merlot

Appellation: [Napa Valley](#)

Grapes: Merlot (75%), Cabernet Sauvignon (21%), Petite Verdot (2%), Malbec (2%)

Price: \$28.00

THE REVIEWER**Laura Ness**

A wine writer and wine judge for major publications and competitions around the country, Laura Ness likens wine to the experience of music. She is always looking for that ubiquitous marriage of rhythm, melody, and flawless execution. What is good music? You

know it when you get lost in it. What is good wine? It is music in your mouth.