

**Grgich Hills Cellar****2004 Merlot  
(Napa Valley)**

The majority of the organic Merlot fruit came from Grgich's cooler-climate Napa Valley vineyards in American Canyon and the Carneros, which is a good thing because the harvest season in 2004 was hot, resulting in a small crop. The remainder of the grapes came off of Grgich's warmer vineyards in Yountville and Calistoga.

What resulted is a wine with definitive raspberry aromas with minerality and earthiness. There's wonderful balance on a substantial body, which will help the wine age for about eight years. It's an effort that will go a long way toward resuscitating the almost moribund Merlot market.

The stated alcohol is 14.3 percent, the wine was aged for 1 1/2 years in a mixture of large and small French barrels, only 20 percent of which were new. There's still plenty of this wine to go around. More than 4,000 cases were produced.

Reviewed February 20, 2008 by [Alan Goldfarb](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Grgich Hills Cellar](#)

**Vintage:** 2004

**Wine:** Merlot

**Appellation:** [Napa Valley](#)

**Grape:** Merlot

**Price:** \$40.00

**THE REVIEWER****Alan Goldfarb**

Alan Goldfarb has been writing about and reviewing wine for 17 years. His reviews have been published in the *St. Helena Star*, *San Jose Mercury*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Decanter*, and *Wine Enthusiast*, among others. Not once has he used a point system, star system, or an iconic symbol to quantify a wine. What counts in Mr. Goldfarb's criteria when judging a wine is: how it tastes in the glass; is it well-constructed; its food compatibility; and presence of redeeming regional attributes.