

**King Family Vineyards | Michael Shaps Wines****2005 Meritage
(Monticello)**

David and Ellen King moved from a farm near Houston, TX to the Blue Ridge foothills of Virginia in the late nineties. Situated in the gently rolling hills of Crozet, VA, some 15 minutes from Charlottesville, the 330-acre estate, once home to peach orchards, currently has 15 acres planted to Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Viognier and Chardonnay.

The 2005 Meritage is a superb example of the quality potential for Virginia red wines. This rich, smooth blend, with its fine structure and spicy fruit, is a beautifully integrated red that is lively and appealing now, but has the balance and depth to develop elegant complexity with another three or four years in bottle. Winemaker Mattieu Finot, who hails from the northern Rhone Valley around Crozes-Hermitage, and consultant Michael Shaps selected best lots of each variety for the 2005 Meritage. The black raspberry accents of Cabernet Franc add a nice punch of fruit that makes it attractive for current drinking.

Not many wineries can boast their own polo field, but the lush green expanse adjacent to this young winery only adds to the scenic beauty of the King family Estate. Each summer the estate hosts the Pink Ribbon Polo Classic, a popular fundraiser that benefits breast cancer research.

Reviewed September 11, 2007 by [Barbara Ensrud](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [King Family Vineyards | Michael Shaps Wines](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Meritage

Appellation: [Monticello](#)

Grapes: [Merlot](#) (75%), [Cabernet Franc](#) (25%)

Price: \$24.95

THE REVIEWER**Barbara Ensrud**

Barbara Ensrud has been writing about and reviewing wines since 1979, with a nationally syndicated column for the *New York Daily News* and numerous other publications. Her "no numbers" approach to evaluating wine is simple: how does it taste – on its own, as well as with particular foods? Is it good value, whether \$10 or \$210? Does it measure up in terms of varietal character and regional identity? ...*"When I taste a good wine, I can't wait to share it with fellow wine lovers."*