

**Osprey's Dominion Vineyards****2002 Merlot  
(North Fork of Long Island)**

Sometimes I get completely and utterly sick of tasting Merlot. It's the most-planted grape on Long Island and every winery makes at least one varietal bottling – and often more than that.

And, despite growing conditions that are excellently suited to the grape, there is a lot of mediocre-to-bad Merlot being produced. It's sad really, because when grown in the right way and treated the right way in the winery, Merlot leads to this region's most consistently delicious wines, even if the best wines will cost you at least \$30 and up to \$125.

That's why Osprey's Dominion Vineyards 2002 Merlot stood out from a dozen local bottles during a recent tasting. It offers classic black plum aromas that mingle with blackberry preserves, sweet cedar, smoke and vanilla. At first the nose seems a little on the fruity side, but the palate shows impeccable balance with rich chocolate, dark fruit flavors accented by tobacco and a clean minty note towards the finish. The medium tannins provide nice, but not overly aggressive, grip and structure. Give it another year or two in bottled and this \$20 wine is really going to round out, I think.

Reviewed June 13, 2007 by [Lenn Thompson](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Osprey's Dominion Vineyards](#)  
**Vintage:** 2002  
**Wine:** Merlot  
**Appellation:** [North Fork of Long Island](#)  
**Grape:** Merlot  
**Price:** \$20.00

**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.