

2011 Washington State Cabernet - Merlot

Kiona Vineyard's Washington State Cabernet-Merlot has garnered a reputation as the little wine that could, and is often compared to other wines costing twice as much.

Whereas a lot of wineries in this price category are content with cutting costs for the sake of filling a niche in the market, we make this wine with purpose. This wine is our outstretched hand, our résumé, our introduction. We want people to enjoy our affordable wines so they'll be more inclined to enjoy our other wines as well. It's important that this wine be *fantastic*, instead of just good.

So that's why you'll notice that the composition for the 2011 vintage is 77% Red Mountain, a decision that may not make much sense from our accountant's perspective, but we think is essential in building a rapport with the people who enjoy our wines.

The goal with blending our Washington State Cabernet - Merlot is to build a well balanced, fruit forward easy drinker, but with the structure and complexity uncommon in its peer group. Red Mountain fruit produces deep, opulent, structured wines, and this is no exception.

During our blending process for the 2011 vintage, I came to describe the Syrah and Merlot additions as the "velvet hammer." Both provided incredible supple/smooth dark fruit and mouthfeel, but not in a way that compromised Cabernet Sauvignon's commanding tannin profile. The Lemberger and Sangiovese components contributed greatly to aromatics and acid balance.

While I am admittedly biased, I believe this wine punches in well above its price category. Our Cabernet - Merlot has been a staple since we started making it in the mid 1990's. A lot of people have described it as "reliable," which may at first sound a little boring, but is actually a great descriptor of its pedigree over the last two decades.

- JJ Williams

Kiona
VINEYARDS

CABERNET - MERLOT

WASHINGTON STATE

ALC. BY VOL. 13.5%

Appellation

Washington State

Vineyard Sources

40% Heart of the Hill - Red Mountain WA
23% Vista - Columbia Valley, WA
21% Kiona Estate - Red Mountain, WA
16% Emory - Red Mountain, WA

Varietal Composition

46% Cabernet Sauvignon
30% Syrah
11% Lemberger
10% Merlot
3% Sangiovese

Barrel Treatment

14 Months, 80/20 French / American, 40% Neutral

Case Production

1,902 cases, 12 x 750 mL, bottled May - June 2013

Technical Data

Ph - 3.68
TA - 0.718
Alcohol - 13.7%