

**Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME
“Merlot and Merlot Blends”
Thursday, May 13, 2010**

PRICES ARE FOR:

1 BOTTLE – 6 BOTTLES – 12 BOTTLES (Mixing OK!)

**Corte Giara Merlot Corvina del Veneto IGT 2008
(Veneto, Italy)**

60% Merlot, 40% Corvina

\$11 each - \$9.90 (6) - \$9.35 (12)

The nose offers plum, black cherry, and a hint of cola. On the palate, the wine is fresh with moderate acidity and flavors of red cherry and currant leading to a lightly spiced finish. Try with salmon, hard salami, or sausage pizza.

**Château de Parenchère Bordeaux Supérieur 2007
(Bordeaux, France)**

65% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc, 1% Malbec

\$16 each - \$14.40 (6) - \$13.60 (12)

This young wine has aromas of wood, earth, plum, and a touch of leather that lead to cherry, plum and earth flavors supported by silky tannins. Still young and developing, this is an elegant promising wine that needs air and a little more time.

Paringa Merlot 2008 (South Australia, Australia)

Merlot

\$11 each - \$9.90 (6) - \$9.35 (12)

Imagine fresh-squeezed raspberries and strawberries mixed with red wine extract, and you’ve captured this thoroughly enjoyable wine. Black cherries and cola are also part of the structured palate of this full-flavored wine with a lingering finish.

The Velvet Devil Merlot 2008 (Columbia Valley, WA)

100% Merlot

\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

Blackberries and chocolate-covered cherries on the nose introduce this pretty wine with a velvety mouthfeel. Cherry, mocha, and elderberry supported by fine tannins lead to a black-fruited finish.

Gainey Vineyard Merlot 2006 (Santa Ynez Valley, CA)

99% Merlot, 1% Cabernet Franc

\$20 each - \$18 (6) - \$17 (12)

Absolutely seamless mix of aromas—black plums, fennel, tobacco, black olives, old wood, and mocha. Full bodied and silky in the mouth with yummy, integrated flavors of mocha and black fruits—berry, cherry, and plum—with a long finish.

See you next Thursday!

Our subject will be

“Southern Hemisphere Wines”

EXPLORE THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS.

Merlot and Merlot Blends

Ever since the movie *Sideways*, Merlot has gotten a bad rap. It’s too undistinguished, too plebian, too *likable*. While it’s true there are lakes of boring Merlot,

the grape itself is anything but, and its ability to blend with others and pair with a wide variety of foods makes it a winner in skilled hands.

There’s a lot of Merlot—it’s the most widely planted red grape in France; worldwide, it’s second only to Cabernet Sauvignon in production. DNA profiling shows that is likely to be an offspring of Cabernet Franc and an unknown other. It’s generally described as “smooth” and “fleshy,” a focus on texture rather than flavor. It often shows a plump, lush fruitiness dominated by blackberries, plums, and cassis, making it a good blending partner, especially with Cabernet Sauvignon. It buds, flowers, and ripens at least a week before Cabernet; its bunches are larger and looser while its skin is thinner and its yields higher. Merlot prefers damp, cool soils with a good clay component but is intolerant of very cold winters. Because Merlot tends to have soft tannins and relatively low acidity, the timing of harvest is important. The acid-tannin profile makes charming, early-drinking, fruity wines. Merlot achieved great popularity in the US in the 1990s, as Chile, southern France, Australia, and California began producing good value Merlot.

Today’s wines show a variety of Merlot styles. The Veneto area of northeast Italy provides **Corte Giara 2008**, a lighter, food-friendly blend of Merlot and Corvina. The latter grape provides a finish of sour cherry. Bordeaux’s Right Bank is home to the famous Merlots of Pomerol and other AOCs. We offer **Chateau de Parenchère Rouge 2007**, in which Merlot plays the starring role, ably supported by Cabernet Sauvignon, with Cabernet Franc and Malbec playing bit parts. This is silky and elegant, very French; the combination of grapes provides supple red and black fruits. Stand-alone Merlots include Washington State’s **Velvet Devil 2008**, made by the iconoclastic Charles Smith. It’s loaded with dark cherries and bittersweet chocolate with a firm finish. David Hickinbotham makes the **Paringa Merlot 2008** from his Southeastern Australia property. This is a fat, lush cassis-laden offering that’s a full-bodied crowd pleaser. We’re also pouring the **Gainey Vineyard Merlot 2006** from a family winery in Santa Barbara County, California. This is a tremendously complex, layered wine that spends 21 months in oak barrels. Its toasty cherry and plum aromas open to reveal cedar, olive, mocha, and tobacco, and its black-fruit flavors are enhanced by roasted coffee and zesty spice. Try with lamb, pork, chicken, and cheese. There’s a reason Merlot is so popular—it’s tasty and easy to drink in a variety of settings!