

2017 CULLEN WINES DIANA MADELINE CABERNET MERLOT



Review Summary

**98 pts/Winner: Best Cabernet & Family/James Halliday's
Top 100 Wines Of 2019**

“The color is faultless, as is the wine. It has waves of complexity, like one of Margaret River’s surf breaks, changing shape as the luxuriant cassis swells on the mid-palate, then finishes with ripe, textured tannins as the wave goes on to crash on the shore. The overall ripeness is perfection.”

James Halliday, Halliday Wine Companion
2020

96 pts “Deep, bright-hued purple. Expansive aromas of dark berry preserves, cherry pit, incense, black pepper, candied rose and spicecake, along with hints of pipe tobacco and vanilla that emerge as the wine opens up. Seamless and broad on the palate, offering wonderfully concentrated yet lively smoke-tinged black and blue fruit, floral pastille and spicecake flavors lifted by a bright mineral flourish. Shows outstanding energy and sharp delineation on the strikingly long, floral- and mineral-accented finish, which is given shape by dusty, fine-grained tannins. There’s 40% new French oak here and it plays in superb harmony with the wine’s pure, expressive fruit.”

Josh Reynolds, Vinous
July 2021

96 pts “2017 was a long growing season, cooler than average. Following significant March rains, fine April weather came to the rescue, with picking taking place between 12 March and 12 April 2017. Aged for 18 months in oak, 40% new, the tannins are fine but youthfully pixelated, seeming to absorb and blot the palate-staining fresh blackberry and currants with sweeter mulberry notes, followed by suggestions of cedar, bitter chocolate, gravel and earth. It has the drier, tobacco-led edge of a cooler year. Promising.”

Rebecca Gibb MW, Decanter
October 2019



95 pts/Cellar Selection “Like all of Cullen’s top reds, this Bordeaux-style blend—made from the winery’s home block of biodynamically farmed fruit—is still a baby. Its youth is particularly pronounced in a cool vintage like 2017, but with time to open up, it hints at extraordinary things for the future. Whispers of dried rose petal, clove, wild currant, red cherry, seaweed and minerals are tucked into a bed of chocolaty, spicy oak, which will integrate with time. The luscious, high-toned fruit is held together by fine, nervy tannins. Put this far out of reach, and don’t touch for at least another five years.”

Christina Pickard, Wine Enthusiast
July 1, 2020

95 pts “Extremely refined and full of tension with blackberry, currant and licorice character. Hints of wet earth. Medium to full body. Firm and silky tannins. Flavorful finish. From biodynamically grown grapes.”

Nick Stock, JamesSuckling.com
June 26, 2019

94 pts “Hints of violets and cocoa accent cassis and blueberry fruit on the nose, while raspberries emerge on the palate. The fine, silky texture continues onto the long finish, ending with some drying tannins. Give this a few years in the cellar and drink it over the next 15 years.”

Joe Czerwinski, Robert Parker’s The Wine Advocate
January 2020

92 pts “Cullen’s blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (81 percent), Merlot, Petit Verdot and Malbec is detailed with anise and red licorice notes, and an explosion of roses and violets, all of it rising off the wine’s clean, plummy flavors. The gentleness of the wine’s texture belies its firm structure, elegant and built to age.”

Joshua Greene, Wine & Spirits
October 2020

90 pts “Rosemary, sage and bay leaf notes add a fresh green edge to the currant, plum and blueberry flavors, with spice accents and cigar box aromatics. The tannins are dense but polished, never getting in the way even as they firm up on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Petit Verdot.”

MaryAnn Worobiec, Wine Spectator
July 2020