

WINE RECOMMENDATION

**Childress Vineyards****2005 Merlot Reserve
(North Carolina)**

Merlot is one of the varieties that continues to improve in North Carolina, as the vines gain maturity and yield more balanced, flavorful fruit. The Childress '05 Reserve Merlot is a good example of this, with its black cherry and black currant flavors, a nice touch of oak (the wine spent a year in used oak) that rounds off the edginess - as does the addition of ripe Syrah, which has a softening effect and adds breadth of flavor. Nice depth, with the potential to improve over the next two to four years (will likely hold longer).

Childress Reserve wines make up only 5 percent of total production, chosen from best lots of the vintage. Despite more intensity and concentration, the Reserves are made from free-run juice and no addition of press wine so that they are not overly tannic.

Reviewed February 20, 2008 by [Barbara Ensrud](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Childress Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Merlot Reserve

Appellation: [North Carolina](#)

Grapes: Merlot (75%), Syrah / Shiraz (20%),
[Cabernet Sauvignon](#) (5%)

Price: \$24.99

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."*