

**Red Rooster Winery****2005 Merlot Reserve
(Okanagan Valley)**

Opened 10 years ago by Swiss immigrants Beat and Prudence Mahrer, Red Rooster was acquired in 2005 by Andrew Peller Ltd., now the largest Canadian-owned wine company. Perhaps surprisingly, the corporate owners have continued to foster the irreverence of the Mahrers – for example, not only keeping a controversial sculpture of a nude male in the tasting room but having a second cast of the piece put on display elsewhere on the winery grounds. That interest in art extends to wine labels such as the Merlot Reserve, created by an Okanagan artist. Peller also brought new capital to the winery, including good new barrels.

The 2005 Merlot Reserve clearly benefits from this, showing the toasty and vanilla notes of the quality French oak in which the wine was aged. Dark in colour, this wine is warm and generous with inviting aromas of currants and chocolate. It is rich on the palate, with flavours of black currants and cherries. The long, ripe tannins add to the wine's richness on the palate. 88 points.

Reviewed October 20, 2007 by [John Schreiner](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Red Rooster Winery](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Merlot Reserve

Appellation: [Okanagan Valley](#)

Grape: Merlot

Price: \$34.90

THE REVIEWER**John Schreiner**

John Schreiner has been covering the wines of British Columbia for the past 30 years and has written 10 books on the wines of Canada and BC. He has judged at major competitions and is currently a panel member for the Lieutenant Governor's Awards of Excellence in Wine. Both as a judge and as a wine critic, he approaches each wine not to find fault, but to find excellence. That he now finds the latter more often than the former testifies to the dramatic improvement shown by BC winemaking in the past decade.