



BLACKSTONE

* 2006 MERLOT, CALIFORNIA

The rich fruit aromas, elegant supple oak toastiness and soft tannins—and at a recession-friendly price point—all help contribute to this wine's success as one of the best selling Merlots in the United States. With bright aromas of black cherry and juicy plum, earthy clove and cinnamon, mint and chocolate, this Merlot pairs nicely with just about any meal that complements its soft, round body and smooth texture.

GIGLIO

This is a seriously good quaffing wine; perfect on its own or with just about any meal you plan on rustling up. Just pour yourself a glass and begin to enjoy its aromas of cherry and plum, clove and cinnamon, mint and chocolate. Soft and round with a smooth texture, it's not long before you're refilling the glass.

BONADIES

This bargain beauty is certain to be a crowd-pleaser. Made from Merlot grapes harvested throughout California, this wine showcases the boldness of California's varied terroirs. It has a deep purple and black robe with plum pudding aromas intermingled with smoke that jumps from the glass. With deep fruity flavors and plush texture, this is a real charmer. Pair it perfectly with stews and other meaty dishes.

JOHNNES

PAIRED WITH

QUICK BEEF STROGANOFF

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon chopped thyme
- Kosher Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup beef gravy
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 12 ounces roast beef, sliced ¼-inch thick and cut into strips

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil until shimmering. Add the onion, mushrooms and thyme, season with salt and pepper and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until tender and browned, 8 minutes. Add the gravy and bring to a boil. Stir in the sour cream. Add the beef and simmer until heated through, about 2 minutes. Serve over buttered noodles.

RECIPE: GRACE PARISI