

**Persimmon Creek Vineyards****2005 Merlot
(Georgia)**

Forget those fruit bomb California Merlots! Head east to the Georgia Mountains for Dr. Sonny Hardman's 2005 Merlot. His juice won't blow your head off with alcohol and a fruit explosion. It's refined, French in style and speaks of its 2100-foot elevation and stony soil. Open his waxed bottle and get ready to wait - you can't just pop and play this wine.

Hardman's Merlot has a deep, plum color that's almost opaque. Keep swirling as you enjoy aromas of plum, Bing cherry, allspice and stone. First planted in 2000, it comes from four acres of his farm near Clayton in northeast Georgia. The Merlot block is on a hill, westward facing, receiving lots of light. Soil is rocky, sandy loam, yet alluvial.

Once it begins to open, you'll think of Bordeaux. There's no barn on this farm, but your nose might bet on one. The earth blends nicely with the tarty plums, cherries, coffee and soft tannins, with a hint of Georgia dust that brings it to a happy ending.

Food pairings that might light up your palate like a Georgia harvest moon include a standing rib roast, fresh Georgia quail - or better yet - it's almost deer season!

Reviewed November 8, 2007 by [Gregory McCluney](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Persimmon Creek Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Merlot

Appellation: [Georgia](#)

Grape: [Merlot](#)

Price: \$24.00

THE REVIEWER**Gregory McCluney**

Greg McCluney has been writing about wine since 1987 and has judged many competitions including the Atlanta International Wine Summit, Florida Suncoast Winefest, Northwest Wine Competition and the Dallas Morning News Wine Competition. His work has appeared in numerous regional, national and international publications including *Wines & Vines*, *AirTran Arrivals* in-flight magazine, *Atlanta Magazine*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *Tampa Bay's Best*, Atlanta Wine School and the James Beard Foundation publications. He conducts wine education classes and consults on wine selections for retail and restaurant clients.