

# Leviathan, the affordable California Cult wine

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Emerging from distinctive Northern California vineyards, Leviathan flows from the skillful hands of a renowned winemaker, complex and with a depth of flavor and finesse rarely seen at this price level. The word “Leviathan” is defined as a formidable, large sea creature, but the [wine](#), a big California red, is not at all monstrous. Smooth and delicious, the [2012 Leviathan Red](#), a blend of 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc, 16% Merlot, and 14% Syrah is simply spectacular. It is a beautiful example of how the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. Ruby velvet in color, this is a dense and textured wine, it’s fruit balanced by a good dose of acidity, not at all jammy like many big California reds. Past the first blush of fruit, and floral perfume, there is a melange of aromas, akin to a ragu that has simmered all day. But while this wine’s aromas and flavors have assimilated into a harmonious nectar, you can recognize each varietal’s contribution to the blend. Cabernet Sauvignon’s blackberry, eucalyptus, and graphite notes, Cabernet Franc’s raspberry tang, Merlot’s plummy core, and Syrah’s spicy character are interwoven into a velvety tapestry of wine. Integrated tannins support the fleshy body, which lingers delightfully long on the palate. So well balanced, the 14.5% ABV seems imperceptible, and the barrel aging of 50% new French oak for 23 months imparts a fragrant cedar quality to the nose. While the 2012 is certainly ready to

drink, this opulent wine can age another few years, evolving into a wine that can go toe to toe with some of the best that Bordeaux has to offer.

Winemaker **Andy Erickson** and his viticulturist wife, Annie Favia, have poured their considerable talent and creativity into their own brands, Leviathan and Favia Wines. Although Erickson is currently consulting for various producers, he is well known for his winemaking prowess at Screaming Eagle and other highly successful labels, including Dalla Valle, Arietta, Ovid, Dancing Hares, and Mayacamas. Blending different lots of finished wines from top vineyards' fruit across California for his Leviathan Proprietary Red, Erickson says, "Blending is one of the most enjoyable and most creative parts of the winemaking process... It allows us to push the envelope, try new things, and have an outlet to give people something unique and, frankly, pretty damn delicious". Erickson looks upon **blending** as fitting pieces together like a puzzle, taking that year's snapshot of fruit quality, varietal, and vineyard sites, then captures this assemblage into a wine worthy of pursuit. As he notes, "What I love about Leviathan is that, if you look closely, you can pull out the nuances of the individual varieties. But the wine also has a character all its own."

Highly rated and critically acclaimed, Leviathan is affordably priced at SRP \$48, a sublime and sensuous red wine that you will want to stock up on. The 2012 vintage was a near perfect harvest, yielding beautiful fruit from all four varietals that go into Leviathan. One bold, rich wine, that highlights the best of California, is set to convert you to the cult of deliciously affordable red wine blends!



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