



# 2015 MERLOT HORSE HEAVEN HILLS



## WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Notes of cocoa powder, ripe blueberry and plum mingle with sweet caramel and vanilla. In the palate, the fruit is plum and dark cherry. This wine has a structural core of powdery tannins that are lifted with a touch of acidity. This big, bold Merlot will pair well with many dishes and has amazing aging potential.

## VINEYARD SOURCING

The grapes for this wine come from our estate vineyards in the Horse Heaven Hills. The Merlot came from Dead Canyon and Zephyr Ridge vineyards, the Cabernet Sauvignon from our Eagle & Plow and Spice Cabinet vineyards, and the Syrah from Spice Cabinet vineyard.

## GROWING SEASON

2015 was the hottest year on record and began with a moderate winter that led into a warm spring and very hot summer. The warm spring resulted in an early bloom, which caused veraison to occur 2-3 weeks earlier than normal, and began harvest 2 weeks ahead of schedule. The heatwave finally tapered off at the end of August, giving us warm days and cool nights which created the perfect conditions for great fruit flavor development. The cool nights maintained the bright natural acidity in the grapes, resulting in balanced wines with concentrated fruit.

## WINEMAKING

These grapes were double sorted, first in the vineyard with the selective harvest on our Pellenc harvesters, then again at the winery on our sorting table. The fruit was not crushed in order to preserve as much whole-berry as possible. At the winery, individual lots were fermented in stainless steel tanks. Twice daily pumpovers allowed gentle extraction of color and tannins. After draining the wine and pressing the skins, the wine was racked to a blend of French and American oak barrels for malolactic fermentation. The wine was aged in barrel for 20 months before being blended together for bottling.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

Appellation .....	Horse Heaven Hills
Blend .....	77% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Syrah
Alcohol .....	13.9%
T.A. ....	0.54 g/100 ml
pH .....	3.78

## SENSORY INDICATOR



- Cocoa Powder
- Ripe Blueberry
- Plum
- Caramel

