



# 2016 Merlot

H O R S E H E A V E N H I L L S



### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Notes of candied walnuts, ripe raspberry jam, plum, and dried cranberries mingle with sweet coconut and vanilla. On the palate, the fruit is mocha and blueberries. 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 fruit is exposed to long, hot, summer days with cool nights allowing uniform ripening, flavor development, bright acidity, and rich dark color. The Merlot came from Dead Canyon and Zephyr Ridge Vineyards, and the Syrah from our Culloden and Dead Canyon Vineyards.

### GROWING SEASON

The 2016 vintage started ahead of schedule and had everyone thinking it was going to be even warmer than 2015, however unusually cool temperatures in July and August were followed by a cool October. The cooler summer temps allowed for longer hang time into September and October. The warm days and cool nights of September gave us ample fruit flavor development balanced with bright acidity.

### WINEMAKING

During harvest, these grapes were sorted in the vineyard to remove "MOG" (Materials other than Grapes) with our state of the art harvesters and sorting equipment. 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 .....	87% Merlot, 13% Syrah
Alcohol .....	14.1%
T.A. ....	0.52 g/100 ml
pH .....	3.8

