

# COLUMBIA CREST

GRAND ESTATES



## TASTING NOTES

"This Merlot has a rich aromatic profile with notes of chocolate and dark cherries. The complex fruit flavors are followed by a smooth, velvety finish. Pair this wine with blue cheese, duck, beef, veal and dark chocolate."

JUAN MUÑOZ OCA, WINEMAKER

**APPELLATION** Columbia Valley

**BLEND** 97% Merlot, 3% Other Red Varietals

**ALCOHOL** 13.5%

**TA** 0.53 g/100mL

**pH** 3.77

## FOOD PAIRINGS

Pork Tenderloin, Grilled Salmon, Soft Cheeses

## 2015 MERLOT

### GROWING SEASON

- The 2015 vintage was one of the warmest growing seasons on record in Washington.
- Warm temperatures continued through the spring and summer, moderating slightly into fall and extending an early harvest.
- Overall, 2015 saw very favorable growing conditions, producing optimal ripening across varieties and yielding outstanding wines throughout the region.

### VINEYARDS

- Fruit was sourced from premier vineyard sites throughout the Columbia Valley, including the Horse Heaven Hills (for texture and body) and the Wahluke Slope (for aromatics and complexity).
- Columbia Valley vineyards are seated in Eastern Washington. This region is mostly dry with less precipitation due to the rain shadow effect from the surrounding Cascade Mountain range.
- Vineyards are 100% drip irrigation. This, combined with the low water-holding capacity of the soil, allow for precise control of the vines.

### VINIFICATION

- Grapes were crushed and then fermented for 6-10 days on skins to extract optimum fruit and textural components.
- Malolactic fermentation occurred in a combination of stainless steel tanks and oak barrels.
- The wine aged predominately in both French and American oak barrels, 40% new, for approximately 17 months. A small percentage of the wine aged in stainless steel to retain freshness of fruit and varietal character.

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