

Chateau Ste Michelle

2009 INDIAN WELLS MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

“The Indian Wells Merlot offers ripe berry fruit aromas and jammy flavors typical of Wahluke Slope reds. This is a full bodied style of warm climate Merlot with a round, supple finish. We added Wahluke Slope syrah to enhance the mouthfeel and rich fruit character. I call this my pasta wine!”

Bob Bertheau

Bob Bertheau, Winemaker

VINTAGE

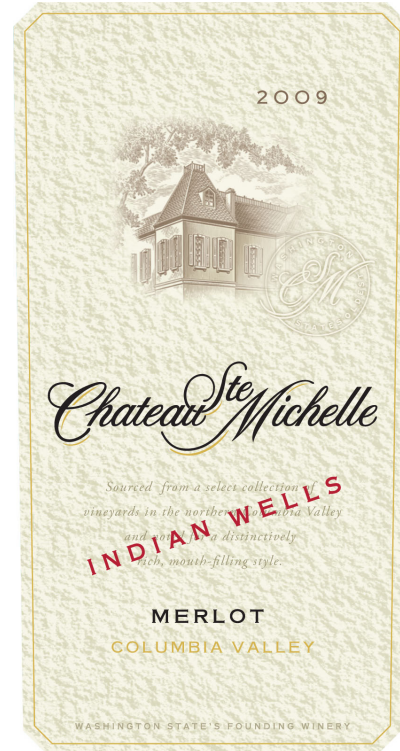
- The 2009 growing season was ideal with dry, warm weather and lots of sunshine.
- The season started a week late in blooming, but caught up as the perfect ripening weather lasted through September.
- The weather was not too hot, which allowed grapes to retain their natural acidity.

VINEYARDS

- This Merlot is sourced predominately from vineyards throughout the Wahluke Slope in Washington state, including our Indian Wells Vineyard.
- Our most northern growing area, the Wahluke Slope is bordered on both the west and the south by the Columbia River.
- Indian Wells vineyard is a very warm site with a long growing season.
- The site's loamy, sandy, well-draining soils allow vine growth to be meticulously controlled.
- The region is a consistent producer of high quality, ripe fruit, yielding wine with intense color and flavor.

WINEMAKING

- Grapes were sorted using the winery's new MOG (material other than grape) separator. This sorting process removes undesirable elements from the grapes resulting in richer, softer tannins and an overall better quality of wine.
- Gentle pumpovers were used to extract optimal flavor and color and minimize harsh tannins. The pumpovers can vary by block, tank and day of fermentation. Every ferment is tasted daily to evaluate the evolution of the tannins, modify extraction techniques and find the right moment to drain the wine off of its skins.
- Aged in 33% new American and 7% new French oak for 16 months.
- Frequent aerative racking took place during barrel aging to soften tannins and enhance mouthfeel.



TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol	14.5%
Total Acidity	0.50g/100 ml
pH	3.84
Blend	80% Merlot, 16% Syrah, 2% Malbec, 2% Cabernet

FOOD PAIRINGS

Foods	hearty pastas, arroz con pollo, flank steak salad
Herbs	mustard, paprika, rosemary, thyme
Spices	Basil, oregano

