



COLUMBIA-CREST
Reserve

2006 Reserve Block 08 Merlot

ABOUT THIS WINE

This debut vintage of the Reserve Block 08 Merlot is part of a small selection of limited edition Reserve vineyard-designated wines from Columbia Crest. This Merlot represents the very best of vintage and varietal from the single vineyard site as picked by Winemaker Ray Einberger. Future vineyard-designated wines will vary by vineyard sites and varietals to match the high standards of the program.

GROWING SEASON

- ▶ The 2006 growing season was marked by weather extremes, with near record rainfall in the Columbia Valley during the early spring and record high temperatures in the early and mid-summer.
- ▶ Although a challenging season weather-wise, exceptional sites including the warmer parts of the Wahluke Slope saw early ripening and bold tannins from the high temperatures.
- ▶ In the cooler growing areas, later ripening prompted good color, pronounced fruit flavors and less aggressive tannins in reds.

VINEYARDS

- ▶ Fruit was handpicked from Four Feathers Vineyard Block 08, which is nestled against a softly sloping hill.
- ▶ Low yielding vines produce small clusters and small berries, resulting in intense varietal flavors and deep color.
- ▶ The balance between warm daytime temperatures and cooler evenings concentrated aromatics and enhanced complexity.
- ▶ Low rainfall stressed the vines, and irrigation was applied judiciously to create concentrated varietal expression.

VINIFICATION

- ▶ Hand-picked grapes were crushed with 30% whole berries remaining.
- ▶ Cold soaking on the skins for two days extracted soft tannins and intense color.
- ▶ Fermentation, including twice-daily pumpovers, lasted 7-14 days, depending on the lot.
- ▶ A portion of the wine went through malolactic fermentation, which occurred in primarily new French oak barrels.
- ▶ The wine aged in a selective mix of new and older oak barrels for 18 months.
- ▶ 300 cases were produced.

- VINEYARDS ▶ FOUR FEATHERS BLOCK 08
- HARVEST DATE ▶ SEPTEMBER 23, 2006
- BLEND ▶ 95% MERLOT, 5% CABERNET SAUVIGNON
- FERMENTATION ▶ 7-14 DAYS ON SKINS
- ALCOHOL ▶ 14.2%
- TOTAL ACIDITY ▶ 0.59 g/100ML
- PH ▶ 3.65



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BLOCK 08 MERLOT
COLUMBIA VALLEY
2006

TASTING NOTES

"This powerful Merlot offers intense aromas of blackberry and licorice which lead to a balanced, velvety palate of chocolate and blackberry flavors and a seductive, silky finish"

Ray Einberger

RAY EINBERGER ▶ COLUMBIA CREST ▶ WINEMAKER