



COLUMBIA·CREST
Reserve

2006 RESERVE MERLOT

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 softer tannins in reds.

VINEYARDS

- ▶ Fruit was handpicked from the vintage's best vineyards for Columbia Crest's Reserve Merlot.
- ▶ Vineyard sites are located on the Wahluke Slope, offering aromatics, texture and complexity; in the Cold Creek area, adding to the flavor and fruitiness; and in the Horse Heaven Hills, contributing balance and body to the finished wine.
- ▶ 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

- ▶ 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 6-10 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 70% new French oak and 30% American oak barrels for 25 months.

VINEYARDS ▶ 100% COLUMBIA VALLEY

HARVEST DATE ▶ OCTOBER 1, 2006

BLEND ▶ 87% MERLOT, 12% CABERNET SAUVIGNON,
1% CABERNET FRANC

FERMENTATION ▶ 6-10 DAYS ON SKINS, PREMIER CUVÉE, CSM

ALCOHOL ▶ 14.2%

TOTAL ACIDITY ▶ 0.51G/100ML

PH ▶ 3.7



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TASTING NOTES

"Intense aromas of blackberries lead to a soft, velvety palate of chocolate and dark berry flavors. This soft, yet powerful Merlot showcases excellent tannin structure integrated with delicate fruit flavors. Drink now, or cellar for years to come."

Ray Einberger

RAY EINBERGER ▶ COLUMBIA CREST ▶ WINEMAKER