

# COLUMBIA-CREST *Reserve*

## 2002 Merlot

### GROWING SEASON

- ▶ The growing season began with cool weather that modestly delayed bud break and fruit set.
- ▶ Consistent and ideal weather conditions from mid-summer to early fall, with daytime to nighttime swings spanning as much as 40 degrees, were perfect for fruit maturation.
- ▶ Grape clusters were compact with large, fully-mature berries.
- ▶ Fruit quality was excellent, marking the 5th consecutive quality vintage.

### VINEYARDS

- ▶ Less than 10% of the vintage's best vineyard sites were harvested for Columbia Crest's Reserve Merlot.
- ▶ Vineyard sites are located on the Wahluke Slope (50%) offering aromatics, texture and complexity and on the Horse Heaven Hills (50%) contributing balance and body to the finished wine.
- ▶ The balance between the growing season's warm daytime temperatures and cooler nighttime temperatures, particularly during the ripening period, 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 pump overs, lasted six to 10 days, depending on the lot.
- ▶ Malolactic fermentation occurred in new French oak barrels.
- ▶ Cabernet Franc (10%), Cabernet Sauvignon (5%) and Syrah (5%) were blended for aromatic complexity and balance before aging in the barrel for 24 months.

VINEYARDS ▶ COLUMBIA VALLEY

HARVEST DATE ▶ SEPTEMBER 14, 2002

BLEND ▶ 80% MERLOT, 10% CABERNET FRANC,  
5% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 5% SYRAH

FERMENTATION ▶ 7 DAYS ON SKINS, PREMIER CUVÉE,  
CSM AND PASTEUR RED YEASTS

ALCOHOL ▶ 14.1%

TOTAL ACIDITY ▶ 0.62g/100ML

PH ▶ 3.59



### TASTING NOTES

*"This Merlot demonstrates Columbia Crest's reputation for deft handling of the varietal. Vanilla, rose petal, blackberry and chocolate aromatics introduce a balanced palate of luscious fruit and velvety tannins. The supple mouthfeel lingers in this classic Washington Merlot."*

*Ray Einberger*

RAY EINBERGER ▶ COLUMBIA CREST ▶ WINEMAKER