

# COLUMBIA CREST Reserve

## 2004 Merlot

### GROWING SEASON

- ▶ A hot, dry growing season created ideal flavor maturity and promoted an early harvest start.
- ▶ Cool temperatures and intermittent rain in mid-September prompted extended hang time, which allowed the grapes to reach ideal physiologic maturing.
- ▶ The 2004 harvest is characterized by smaller berry and cluster size, with intense flavors, good sugar development and high natural acidity.

### VINEYARDS

- ▶ Fruit was handpicked from the top 10% of 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 flavor and fruitiness; and on the Horse Heaven Hills, contributing balance and body to the finished wine.
- ▶ The balance between the growing season's warm daytime temperatures and cooler nights, 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 to 10 days, depending on the lot.
- ▶ Malolactic fermentation occurred in primarily new French (72%) and one-year-old American (19%) oak barrels.
- ▶ The wine aged in barrels for 27 months.

VINEYARDS ▶ COLUMBIA VALLEY

HARVEST DATE ▶ SEPTEMBER 17, 2004

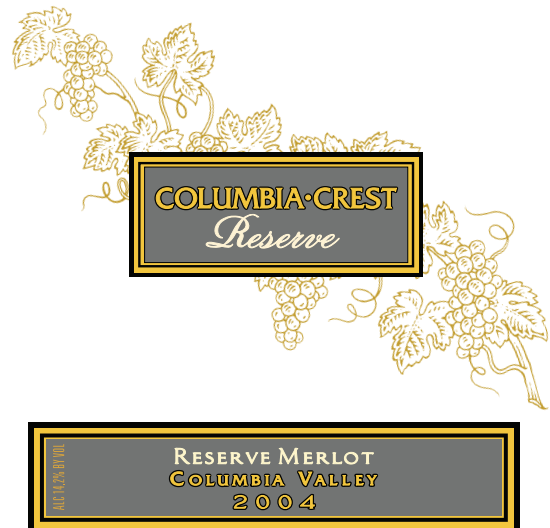
BLEND ▶ 90% MERLOT, 10% CABERNET SAUVIGNON

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

ALCOHOL ▶ 14.2%

TOTAL ACIDITY ▶ 0.54G/100ML

PH ▶ 3.68



### TASTING NOTES

*"This classic Washington state Merlot offers aromatics of spice, blackberry, and chocolate which lead into a balanced palate of velvety-textured fruit and tannins. The long, seductive finish lingers."*

*Ray Einberger*

RAY EINBERGER ▶ COLUMBIA CREST ▶ WINEMAKER