



COLUMBIA·CREST  
*Reserve*

## 2005 RESERVE MERLOT

### GROWING SEASON

- ▶ Harvest commenced as one of the earliest on record.
- ▶ Warm summer months and cool evenings contributed to the uniformity of berry maturation.
- ▶ A temperature drop in late summer cooled the vineyard and allowed the grapes extra hang time to enhance flavor and aromatic development.
- ▶ Moderate weather conditions during harvest contributed to mature fruit with intense flavors, good sugar development, and high natural acidity across varieties.

### 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 new barrels for 24 months.

VINEYARDS ▶ 100% COLUMBIA VALLEY

HARVEST DATE ▶ OCTOBER 5, 2005

BLEND ▶ 95% MERLOT, 5% CABERNET FRANC

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

ALCOHOL ▶ 14.2%

TOTAL ACIDITY ▶ 0.60G/100ML

PH ▶ 3.54



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### TASTING NOTES

*"This classic Washington state Merlot offers dark fruit aromas with hints of spice and slight pepper aromas which lead to a soft, velvety palate of chocolate and blackberry flavors. All of the fruit notes mingle harmoniously on the long, complex finish"*

*Ray Einberger*

RAY EINBERGER ▶ COLUMBIA CREST ▶ WINEMAKER