



# 2004 *Fidelitas Merlot*

*columbia valley*

## **WINEMAKER'S NOTES**

Our 2004 Merlot is highlighted by cherry, blackberry, vanilla and spice notes. This ripe, lush red offers great length on the palate and well-integrated tannins—key characteristics of a classic Merlot.

## **VINTAGE**

The 2004 harvest was one of the earliest on record. The growing season's ideal warm temperatures led to early ripeness and high quality fruit similar to other exceptional warm vintages in Washington. A modest cool spell in early September helped cool down the vineyards and slowed fruit maturation for added "hang time."

## **VINEYARDS**

Champoux Vineyard (23%)  
Gamache Vineyard (17%)  
Goose Ridge Vineyard (17%)  
Milbrandt – Katherine Leone (17%)  
Stillwater Creek (13%)  
Weinbau Vineyard (13%)

## **FERMENTATION AND AGING**

All the fruit for the Merlot was hand picked and sorted in the vineyard. Upon arrival at the winery, the fruit was destemmed and crushed directly to a small fermentation tank where the wines were punched down three times daily. Average primary fermentation was seven days in length. Upon completion of fermentation, the wines were gently pressed off and were put into barrels immediately. Once fermentation was complete in barrel, the wine was put through malolactic fermentation immediately. While aging in oak barrels, the wines were racked quarterly to naturally clarify the wine.

## **VARIETAL COMPOSITION**

100% Merlot

## **OAK AGING**

The wine was racked to 100% small oak barrels (French and American), with approximately 60% new oak, and was barrel-aged for 18 months with four rackings.

## **TECHNICAL**

Bottled 600 cases; pH 3.72, acid 0.54 g/100ml, 14.5% alcohol by volume, <0.02% residual sugar

## **RELEASE DATE**

September 1, 2006

