



# *2009 Fidelitas Champoux Vineyard Merlot*

*horse heaven hills*

## TASTING NOTES

The 2009 Champoux Vineyard Merlot is young, yet shows incredible promise with age. Aromas of blueberry, cranberry, dried herbs and a slight note of vanilla rise from the glass. The palate is intense and plush with soft tannins and added notes of dark cherry, violets and sun dried tomatoes. The 2009 vintage was aged for 22 months in 80% New French Oak. Drink now through 2018.

## VARIETAL COMPOSITION

100% Merlot

## VINEYARD

Champoux Vineyard sits high in the Horse Heaven Hills region, about five miles above the Columbia River. The vineyard was first planted in 1972 and is known for producing some of the greatest old vine wines in Washington State. Paul and Judy Champoux came here in 1986, expanding the size to about 180 acres. While there are eleven varieties planted within Champoux Vineyard, nearly half of the acreage is dedicated to cabernet sauvignon. Champoux Vineyard wines are known for having a "masculine" quality, providing bold fruit and well structured tannins.

## VINTAGE

The 2009 vintage began with a cool, wet spring that delayed bud break until later than usual. Early summer proved to be warm and dry with hot temperatures later in the season causing rapid, consistent ripening for round, full flavors in the grapes. Overall, the growing season was warm and favorable, with a very quick harvest at the end and an early freeze just after the grapes were off the vines. Wines from this vintage are showing wonderful potential for time in the cellar.

## VINIFICATION and AGING

All fruit for Fidelitas is hand picked and sorted in the vineyard. At the winery, grapes are destemmed and crushed directly into small fermentation tanks where the must is punched down three times daily for an average of seven days. Upon completion of fermentation, the wine is gently pressed off and immediately put into barrel, where it undergoes malolactic fermentation. While aging in oak barrels, the wines are racked quarterly to naturally clarify the wine. The 2009 vintage of Champoux Vineyard Merlot has been aged in 80% new French for 24 months.

## RELEASE DATE

May 2012, 240 cases

## ALCOHOL

14.7% alcohol by volume

