

Chateau Ste Michelle®

2004 MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

"THIS IS OUR SERIOUS YET APPROACHABLE MERLOT. THE WINE SHOWS COMPLEX AROMAS OF BLACK CHERRIES, RED LICORICE AND A TOUCH OF CEDAR. THE VOLUMINOUS YET RACY MIDPALATE EMPHASIZES SWEET FRUIT, WITH A LINGERING CHERRY FINISH. IT HAS THE TYPICAL FULL STRUCTURE OF A WASHINGTON STATE MERLOT BUT IN A SOFTER PACKAGE FOR VERSATILITY AND FRIENDLINESS. TRY WITH PASTA MARINARA OR BEEF KABOBS.....TRULY VERSATILE!"

Bob Bertheau

BOB BERTHEAU, HEAD WINEMAKER

VINTAGE

- A hot growing season in 2004 followed by a cool fall created a longer harvest, resulting in wines with ripe, rich flavors.
- Hot, dry weather from bud break to mid-August prompted the earliest harvest start on record, beginning August 16.
- Cool temperatures and intermittent light rain in mid-September slowed ripening and extended hang time.
- Warm temperatures and dry weather resumed in early October through harvest's end with final berries being picked in early November.

VINEYARDS

- Sourced from Columbia Valley vineyards in eastern Washington, including our Cold Creek and Canoe Ridge Estate vineyards, as well as vineyards on the Wahluke Slope.
- Columbia Valley vineyards lie in the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountains and receive just 6-8 inches of rainfall annually.
- Warm, sunny days and cool evening temperatures create ideal conditions for intense aroma and flavor development in the ripening grapes.
- Sandy soils with low fertility and low water-holding capacity enable precise control of vine growth.

WINEMAKING

- 2004 marks Bob Bertheau's first red wine harvest for Chateau Ste. Michelle, having the red winemaking reins from start to finish for the first time.
- His goal is to produce a softer mouthfeel and enhanced complexity in the red wines, while highlighting Washington fruit character.
- Ripe grapes were destemmed, crushed and inoculated with various strains of yeast to maximize complexity.
- Gentle pumpovers during fermentation were used to extract color and flavor and produce soft, supple tannins.
- Aged 15 months in American and French oak, 30% new.
- Bob used earlier drain times and restrained oak to achieve a more approachable style for this wine.



TECHNICAL DATA

TOTAL ACIDITY 0.57g/100ml

PH 3.65

ALCOHOL 13.5%

BLEND 82% Merlot
16% Syrah
2% Cabernet Sauvignon

FOOD PAIRING

FOODS beef, lamb, grilled salmon,
hearty pastas

HERBS basil, oregano

SPICE allspice, nutmeg, star anise

