

Chateau Ste Michelle®

2005 MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

"THIS IS OUR COMPLEX YET APPROACHABLE MERLOT. THE WINE OFFERS AROMAS AND FLAVORS OF BLACK CHERRY, COLA, LEATHER AND SPICE. IT'S SOFT AND ACCESSIBLE WITH LAYERS OF COMPLEXITY. I THINK OF IT AS A GREAT "EVERYDAY RED WITH WASHINGTON STYLE."

Bob Bertheau

BOB BERTHEAU, HEAD WINEMAKER

VINTAGE

- The 2005 harvest tested our winemaker's patience, but ultimately delivered excellent quality fruit.
- The growing season started cool, followed by 90+ degree days in July and August.
- September brought cool and constant weather, which extended the season, allowing grapes extra time to ripen on the vine and enhance flavor development.

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

- Winemaker Bob Bertheau's 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.
- Daily gentle pumpovers were used to extract optimal flavor and color and minimize harsh tannins. The pumpovers can vary by block, tank and day of fermentation. Every ferment is tasted every day to evaluate the evolution of the tannins, modify extraction techniques and find the right moment to drain the wine off of its skins.
- Aged 15 months in American and French oak.
- Bob used earlier drain times and restrained oak to achieve a more approachable style for this wine.



TECHNICAL DATA

TOTAL ACIDITY 0.55g/100ml

PH 3.67

ALCOHOL 13.5%

BLEND 83% Merlot
14% Syrah
3% Cabernet Sauvignon

FOOD PAIRING

FOODS beef, lamb, grilled salmon,
hearty pastas

HERBS basil, oregano

SPICE allspice, nutmeg, star anise

