

Chateau Ste Michelle

2008 INDIAN WELLS MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

“The Indian Wells Merlot offers ripe berry fruit aromas and jammy flavors typical of Wahluke Slope reds. This is a full bodied style of warm climate Merlot with a round, supple finish. We added Wahluke Slope syrah to enhance the mouthfeel and rich fruit character. I call this my pasta wine!”

Bob Bertheau

Bob Bertheau, Winemaker

VINTAGE

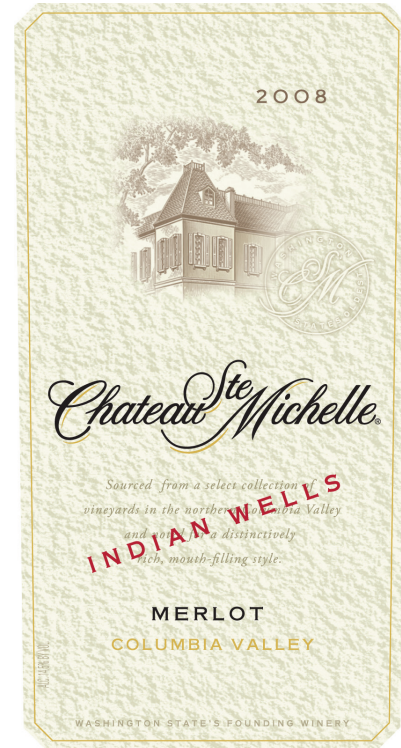
- A “perfect” ripening season with full crop yields, and restrained sugar levels led to outstanding wines from Washington state’s Columbia Valley in 2008.
- Delayed slightly by cool spring weather and a moderate summer, harvest began 10 days later than normal.
- Warm weather in August provided ideal ripening conditions for grapes across all varietals and harvest was quickly ramped up in order to obtain fruit at the optimum ripeness.

VINEYARDS

- This Merlot is sourced predominately from vineyards throughout the Wahluke Slope in Washington state, including our Indian Wells Vineyard.
- Our most northern growing area, the Wahluke Slope is bordered on both the west and the south by the Columbia River.
- Indian Wells vineyard is a very warm site with a long growing season.
- The site’s loamy, sandy, well-draining soils allow vine growth to be meticulously controlled through drip irrigation and canopy management.
- The region is a consistent producer of high quality, ripe fruit, yielding wine with intense color and flavor.

WINEMAKING

- Ripe grapes were destemmed and inoculated with various strains of yeast to maximize complexity.
- 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 daily to evaluate the evolution of the tannins, modify extraction techniques and find the right moment to drain the wine off of its skins.
- Aged in American and French oak for 16 months.
- Frequent aerative racking took place during barrel aging to soften tannins and enhance mouthfeel.
- Syrah from the Wahluke Slope contributed an enhanced jammy fruit character to the wine.



TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol	14.4%
Total Acidity	0.51g/100 ml
pH	3.88
Blend	78% Merlot, 18% Syrah, 2% Cabernet, 2% Malbec

FOOD PAIRINGS

Foods	hearty pastas, arroz con pollo, flank steak salad
Herbs	mustard, paprika, rosemary, thyme
Spices	Basil, oregano

