

milbrandt *vineyards*



2009 The Estates Merlot

Overview

In 1997, we planted our first vines in the Eastern Washington AVAs of Columbia Valley and Wahluke Slope. At first glance, Eastern Washington is not your typical wine country. It's a remote, windswept, high desert dotted with sagebrush and tumbleweeds. But our family had been farming here since the mid-1950s and we believed the region's moderate temperatures, low rainfall and sandy soils were ideal for grapes. To help with the planting and farming, we hired well-respected viticulturist James McFerran. Eight years later, after selling our fruit to many of Washington's preeminent wineries, we hired veteran winemaker Gordon Hill to produce wines from the best blocks. Today, we farm 12 distinct estate vineyard sites totaling nearly 2,000 acres.

Vineyards

The fruit for our 2009 Merlot is sourced primarily from one of our most respected sites, Clifton Vineyard. The Clifton Vineyard overlooks the Columbia River on the west side of the Wahluke Slope near the Sentinel Gap. It features fine, wind-blown sand, covering river rock deposited by ancient glacial floods. The sandy soils create excellent drainage and promote early maturation of the fruit. Our 2009 Merlot also features wine grapes from our 92-acre Northridge Vineyard. This vineyard is growing in fame for consistently producing concentrated and complex Bordeaux varieties.

Tasting Notes

Deep red amethyst in color, our 2009 estate bottling exhudes aromas of ripe currants, cassis and tree ripened plums with oaky notes of rich maple and vanilla. Our Merlot is full-bodied with elegant structure featuring creamy mocha oak flavors and a long, silky finish. This wine may be enjoyed with a variety of foods, from chicken marsala or veal parmigiana to soups like minestrone.

Words from our Winemaker

"The terroir of Eastern Washington seems to emphasize the true character of Merlot. Our Merlot is full-bodied with aromas of dark, dusty cocoa, lush Bing cherry flavors and a long, lingering smooth finish."

Wine Statistics

Composition	91% Merlot 9% Cabernet Sauvignon
Vineyards	87% Clifton 10% Northridge 3% Wahluke Slope
Alcohol	14.5%
TA	.45
pH	3.76
Harvest	09/08/09
Yeast	Prise de Mousse
Aging/oak	77% American and French oak, 18 months barrel aging
Cases	1,010