LITTLE ENGINE
WINES

2015 Gold Merlot

Production: 140 cases
Alcohol: 14.9%

Viticulture Notes

2015 was a dry and very warm vintage by Okanagan standards. The warm spring followed a mild winter and brought an early bud break for most varieties in the Valley. The growing season was hot and dry, resulting in one of the earliest Harvests on record for the Okanagan Valley. Early season leaf removal ensured good bunch exposure and canopy airflow.

The fruit for this wine was sourced from three Naramata Bench vineyards, including one estate owned. Harvest dates were early to mid-October, based on flavour and tannin ripeness in the vineyard. Crop yields were kept at about 3.5 tons per acre; low for Merlot standards. This was done to concentrate the fruit.

Winemaking Notes

Hand harvested and sorted in the vineyard, the Merlot grapes are de-stemmed into one ton fermenters ensuring a high proportion of whole berries. After a few days of cold soak, the musts are gradually warmed up to initiate a natural or directed fermentation. Hand plunging is used to keep the cap moist and ensure colour and tannin extraction. The fermentation temperatures are maintained cool early in ferment and then elevated to aid in phenolic extraction. The total maceration time is about three weeks. The wines are drained and pressed off just before dryness and tank settled prior to going to barrel.

Our Merlot prefers 100% French oak. It undergoes spontaneous malolactic fermentation and matures in barrel for 16 months with no racking until pre-bottle blending. The 2015 Gold Merlot is 63% new oak and the balance in 2nd and 3rd fill barrels. Unfiltered prior to bottling.

Tasting Notes & Suggested Cellaring

A luscious and bold wine that is not to be taken lightly. Inviting notes of cassis, tobacco leaf and sarsaparilla lead to a plush and complex palate. Wood spices and vanilla bean that allude to the well-integrated French oak. The persistent finish will leave you simultaneously satiated, yet wanting more.

Supremely balanced upon release though under ideal cellaring conditions, can age to max. 2027 as it's well structured.

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