

# LITTLE ENGINE

W I N E S

## 2016 SILVER MERLOT



Production: 683 cases

Alcohol: 14.2%

pH: 3.52

### VITICULTURE NOTES

The 2016 season started very early with unusually warm April weather. Bud break was about the 2nd week of April and we had vigorous vine growth through June. Canopy management was key to ensure air flow and give adequate bunch exposure where required. September and October warmed up and were mostly dry, allowing grapes to extend their ripening time on the vine.

The fruit is predominantly from our own estate vineyards and a small percentage is sourced from select Naramata Bench growers. Harvest dates were early to mid-October, based on flavour and tannin ripeness in the vineyard. Bunches are exposed early in the growing season to aid in phenolic development.

Crop yields were kept at an average of 3.0 tons per acre; low for Merlot standards. This was done to concentrate the fruit.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

Hand harvested and de-stemmed into one ton fermenters to encourage a high percentage of whole berries. After a few days of cold soaking, 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 3 weeks. The wines are drained and pressed off just before dryness and tank settled prior to going to barrel. Our Merlot undergoes spontaneous malolactic fermentation and matures in French Oak barrels (18% new) for 15 months.

### TASTING NOTES & SUGGESTED CELLARING

Gorgeous layers of ripe red fruit with a subtle ribbon of warm spice. Highlighted notes of juicy raspberries and a hint of anise in the background. The palate is silky yet plush and carries into a structured, lingering finish.

While easily indulged upon release, this wine will develop well through 2023 under ideal cellaring conditions.

### CULINARY INSPIRATION

Variety of vegetables marinated in a raspberry balsamic marinade and lightly barbecued, along with a grilled rib eye steak.