

LITTLE ENGINE

W I N E S

2019 GOLD MERLOT



Production: 507 cases
Alcohol: 13.5%
pH: 3.58

VITICULTURE NOTES

After a cold February with ample snow, most of March and early April was warm with above average temperatures. Budbreak for Estate Vineyards was during the third week of April. May continued to be warm with temperatures reaching 30 degrees C. This gave us rapid shoot growth.

After flowering at the beginning of June, the weather cooled off and gave us higher than normal precipitation. Warm August temperatures encouraged an early veraison.

September brought more rain than usual and cooler temperatures which delayed ripening for some varieties. Canopy management was crucial throughout the season to create airflow through the vines and amongst the clusters as humidity was a recurring issue. October 10 brought a severe cold snap and shut down all the vines across the Okanagan.

Sourced primarily from estate grown Merlot grapes at our Corbishley Vineyard, harvest dates were at the end of October based on flavour and tannin ripeness in the vineyard. Crop yield was 3 tons per acre, quite low for Merlot standards, to ensure fruit concentration.

WINEMAKING NOTES

Hand harvested and sorted in the vineyard, the Merlot grapes are destemmed only into one-ton fermenters ensuring a high proportion of whole berries. After 6-7 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 3 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, undergoes spontaneous malolactic fermentation and matures in barrel for 16 months with no racking until pre-bottle blending. The 2019 Gold Merlot is 54% new oak puncheons and barrels with the balance in 2nd and 3rd fill barrels. Unfined & unfiltered prior to bottling.

TASTING NOTES & SUGGESTED CELLARING

A concentrated nose draws you in with notes of licorice, macerated cherries, blueberry, tobacco leaves and cedar layered with a slight herbal accent. This full-bodied wine offers a depth of flavours of tart cherries, plums and sassafras and with juicy, mouth-coating tannins. Elegant and well-structured, the complex finish is long and pronounced.

Decant to enjoy now through 2028 under ideal cellaring conditions