



NORTHSTAR

2004 MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY



TECHNICAL DATA

TOTAL ACIDITY	0.58G/100ML
PH	3.70
ALCOHOL	14.5%
BLEND	76% MERLOT
	14% CABERNET SAUVIGNON
	10% PETIT VERDOT

VINTAGE OVERVIEW

The 2004 growing season got off to a warm start followed by a cooler period during bloom. The hot, dry summer months created uniform berry maturation with intense flavors, good sugar development and high natural acidity. Warm temperatures during the last days of summer produced excellent ripening conditions. Cooler temperatures and intermittent light rain in mid-September slowed ripening and extended hang time. 2004 followed a freeze year resulting in a lighter crop throughout the region.

VINEYARDS

Diversity of vineyards and sub-appellations within the Columbia Valley are Northstar's hallmarks. Fruit is selected from the very best possible sources throughout the Columbia Valley. The Northstar team works closely with each grower to achieve specific fruit quality and yield parameters. Vines are an average of 15 years old and yield grapes with concentrated varietal flavors of cherry and plum with elegant tannins. Fruit from over 8 separate vineyards and 10 different blocks contributed to the blend.

WINEMAKING

At harvest, grapes were held separately, destemmed and crushed with 25% whole berries remaining. Grapes were fermented on the skins for five days with daily punch downs to extract flavor, colors and fine tannins. The wine was placed into 70 % French and 30% American oak barrels, where it underwent malolactic fermentation. The barrel rotation included 70% new barrels. The lots aged separately for 18 months with barrel-to-barrel racking occurring at three month intervals.

TASTING NOTES

An elegant wine that opens with bold aromas of raspberry, mint, maple, chocolate, clove, coconut and licorice, it's medium-bodied, dense and muscular with a bold, rich, smoky coffee-mocha finish.

– David “Merf” Merfeld, Winemaker