



# NORTHSTAR

2002 Merlot  
Columbia Valley

## VINTAGE OVERVIEW

- ✦ The 2002 growing season began cool, then warm temperatures in the high 90's put the crop ahead of schedule in some areas.
- ✦ Harvest began as early as September 9. Cool weather hit in late September, slowing down activity and allowing fruit to mature and intensify flavors.
- ✦ Fruit characterized by small berries and well-balanced flavors contributed to the state's fifth straight outstanding vintage.

## VINEYARDS

- ✦ Diversity of vineyards and sub-appellations within the Columbia Valley are the trademark of this wine.
- ✦ For the 2002 vintage, Northstar winemaker Gordy Hill selected small sections within the best vineyards that he knows will deliver the characteristics he is seeking.
- ✦ Each grower for Northstar works diligently to meet the winemaker's specifications for fruit quality and yield.
- ✦ Vines average 15 years old and yield grapes with concentrated varietal flavors of cherry and plum with elegant tannins.
- ✦ Fruit from 11 different vineyards contributed to the final blend.

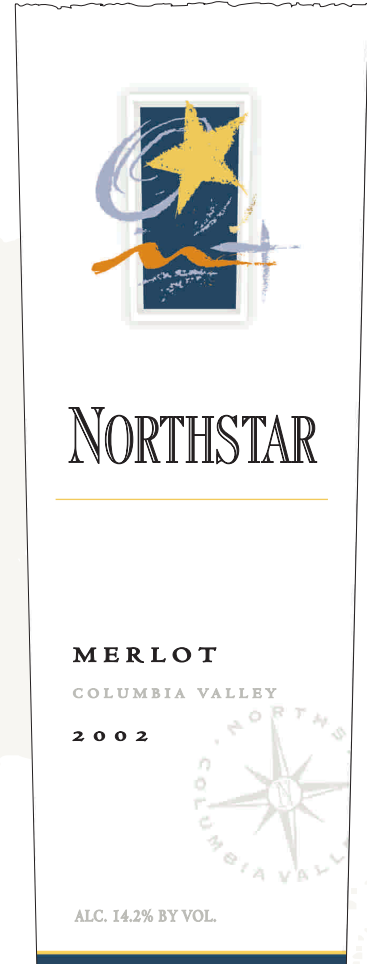
## WINEMAKING

- ✦ Ripe grapes are destemmed and crushed, leaving 25% whole berries intact, then inoculated with *Premier Cuvée* yeast.
- ✦ Individual lots were fermented separately and gently pumped over twice daily during the 7-day fermentation period.
- ✦ After primary fermentation, the wine was racked into barrels where it underwent malolactic fermentation.
- ✦ Aged for 18 months in primarily French and some American oak, using 90% new and 10% one-year-old barrels.
- ✦ Individual lots were racked every three months for clarity for a total of six rackings.
- ✦ The final blend was created with selections from 17 different individual lots of finished wine, which were kept separate since crush, fermentation and through aging, to create a wine of power and finesse.

## TASTING NOTES

"A rich, full-bodied wine, packed with cassis and red plum flavors that float through to a firm finish. This substantial Merlot combines both power and elegance through its incredible depth and complexity."

*Gordon Hill*  
Gordon Hill, Winemaker



### Technical Data

Total Acidity	0.65 g /100 ml
pH	3.63
Alcohol	14.2%
Bottling Date	July 2004
Blend	76% Merlot, 23% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Petit Verdot

### Primary Vineyards

Vineyard	Appellation	Varietal
Andrews	Horse Heaven	Merlot
Beverly	Wahluke Slope	Merlot
Conner Lee	Columbia Basin	Merlot
Weinbau	Wahluke Slope	Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon
Indian Wells	Wahluke Slope	Merlot
Canoe Ridge Estate	Horse Heaven	Merlot
Coyote Creek	Horse Heaven	Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon
Vineyard 10	Horse Heaven	Merlot
Windrow	Walla Walla	Cabernet Sauvignon
High River	Columbia Basin	Cabernet Sauvignon
Stone Tree	Horse Heaven	Petit Verdot