

FLY ROD CELLARS

2020 STEVE'S MERLOT



TASTING NOTES

Our first varietal Merlot is dedicated to the memory of co-winemaker John Richardson's cousin and friend Steve Danton. Steve loved Merlot, so to honor him, we sourced fruit from two premium Red Mountain vineyards: Ciel du Cheval and Quintessence. Aromas of cherry, vanilla, leather and anise. Flavors of black cherry, plum, herbs, chocolate and a hint of oak. Medium body with soft tannins and a juicy finish. Our favorite food pairings are pizza, BBQ chicken, rack of lamb or ratatouille.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Brix (% sugar) at harvest was 24%-27%. Our grapes were hand sorted and mechanically destemmed into a small bin for a 3 day cold soak to bring out flavors and color. Yeast and nutrients were then added to start 8-11 day fermentations followed by a 9 day extended maceration on the skins to enhance the mid-palate and soften tannins. Then the "free run" wine was pumped into barrels and the remaining skins were gently pressed to extract remaining wine. into the barrels. The wine then went through a malolactic fermentation which further softens the wine. The wine was aged for 22 months in 38% new French Oak and 62% neutral French oak and bottled on August 8, 2022.

VINTAGE AND VINEYARD NOTES

2020 was a relatively warm year for Washington with a significantly smaller crop than average. Significant wildfire smoke in September delayed harvest for nearly 10 days. The combination of smaller berries and extended hang time led to exceptionally high quality wines. Many growers and winemakers were excited with the result, noting the dark color of the reds. Our grapes were picked on Sept. 9 and Sept. 18.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Vintage: 2020

pH: 3.59

Cases: 120

TA: 5.6 g/L

AVA: Red Mountain

Alcohol: 14.5%