

L'Ecole

No 41

2015 Merlot – Cabernet Franc Walla Walla Valley

WINEMAKER COMMENT

Merlot and Cabernet Franc excel at our Estate Ferguson and Seven Hills vineyard. This is our first 50/50 blend of these two superior varietals made in a classic Right Bank Bordeaux style.

SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD

56% Ferguson, 44% Seven Hills

VINTAGE

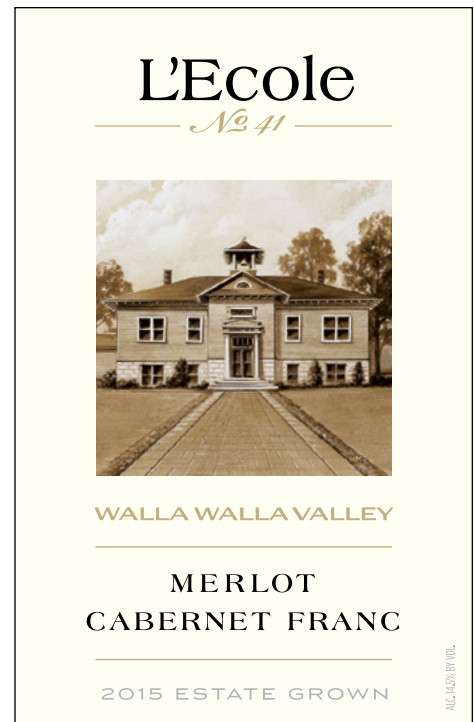
- The 2015 vintage in Washington is now the warmest vintage on record, exceeding the already warm 2013 and 2014 vintages.
- Bud break was two or three weeks early (end of March to first of April). That set a pattern for the year with flowering, fruit set, Veraison, and harvest occurring similarly early.
- An unusual number of excessive heat days in July (over 95 F) resulted in some vine shut down and early exposure to sunburn. Proper irrigation and canopy management were critical to ensure vine health and quality fruit health during the unusually hot July.
- Mid-August temperatures moderated with cooler nights stimulating color and structure development. High level smoke from wild fires reduced sunlight and photosynthesis for a two week period in August, delaying maturity of some vineyards. Classically moderate fall temperatures kicked in extending hang-time for later maturing varietals.
- Vines adapted to the three year warm cycle, delivering the earliest harvest on record with lower yields due to smaller berries, higher sugars and lower acids, yet deeply colored structured reds with exciting potential.

WINEMAKING

- Over 30 years of meticulous vineyard management and winemaking experience are fundamental to the quality of our wines and reputation for excellence. We are engaged in growing and making 100% of our wines.
- Each lot was hand harvested ripe and gently crushed into 1.5 ton stainless steel fermenters.
- Gentle handling of the fruit through hand punch downs and gravity assisted movements were utilized throughout the entire winemaking process.
- The wine was cleanly racked to 100% French oak barrels, with 30% new, with four rackings over 18 months.

TASTING NOTES

In this Estate blend, Merlot brings aromas of dark fruit, cedar and earth partnered with Cabernet Franc's intriguing aromas of violets, fresh peppercorn and dried herbs. Elegant and balanced on the palate, it shows black cherry, cocoa and plum flavors with savory notes of cigar box on a structured, mouthwatering finish.



HARVEST DATA

Harvest Dates	SEPTEMBER 1-14, 2015
Average Brix	25.6°
Average pH	3.49
Average Acidity	5.9 g/L

WINE DATA

Composition	50% MERLOT, 50% CABERNET FRANC
pH	3.68
Total Acidity	6.3g/L
Alcohol	14.5%
Bottling Date	JULY 10, 2017
Release Date	MARCH 2018
Case Production	388