

2015 Merlot Columbia Valley

92 points, James Suckling, www.JamesSuckling.com,
May 2018

"Blackberry and violet aromas with hints of hazelnut. Medium-bodied and layered. Polished tannins and a flavorful finish. Drink or hold."
— James Suckling

90 points, Best Buy, Wine & Spirits,
www.wineandspirits.com,
August 2018

"Forestry and even a touch meaty, this merlot has a black-cherry core of flavor that's deep and satisfying; cedar and redwood tips give the wine a subtly savory finish. It's a complex merlot for rosemary roast chicken." — Patrick Comiskey

89 points, Stephen Tanzer, Vinous, www.Vinous.com,
November 2018

"Bright, dark ruby-red. Aromas of cassis, blackberry, cocoa powder, licorice and chocolatey oak. Silky-sweet but with lovely acidity and a note of violet lifting the dark berry, herb and chocolate flavors. Finishes with building, tongue-coating tannins and very good length. Serious Merlot." — Stephen Tanzer

89 points, Wine Spectator, www.winespectator.com,
June 30, 2018

"Precise and lively, with black currant, green olive and spice flavors that tighten slightly on the finish. Drink now through 2022."
— Tim Fish

89 points, Robert Parker, www.RobertParker.com,
June 2018

"Aromas of currant fruit and fruitcake, framed by cedary new oak, introduce the 2015 Columbia Valley Merlot, a medium-bodied, supple wine with juicy acids and a clean, oak-inflected finish. It's cleanly made but can't match the depth or concentration of the similar inexpensive Syrah. The blend includes 13% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec and 2% Petit Verdot." — William Kelley

88 points, Jeb Dunnuck, www.JebDunnuck.com,
April 2018

"The base Merlot from this great estate is the 2015 Merlot Columbia Valley, which spent 18 months in 25% new French oak. Black cherries, passion fruits, violets, and leafy herbs all emerge from this medium-bodied, balanced, deliciously gulpable Merlot that's ideal for drinking over the coming 4-5 years." — Jeb Dunnuck

88 points, Wine Enthusiast, www.winemag.com,
July 2018

"This is a true pan-Washington Merlot, with fruit coming from nine vineyards across the state. Blended with a good whack of Cabernet Franc (13%) which reveals itself, baking-spice, plum, raspberry and herb aromas are followed by soft ripe fruit flavors, with the tannins pulled back. Herb and raspberry notes linger on the tart finish."
— Sean Sullivan

Best Merlot \$25 or More, Seattle Magazine Wine
Awards, www.seattlemag.com,
August 2018

"L'Ecole No. 41 is a stalwart winery of the Walla Walla Valley, with a track record of consistent excellence. Marty Clubb and Mike Sharon source Merlot (along with small amounts of Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot) from 10 vineyard sites scattered across Washington and masterfully blend them into a balanced package bursting with black cherry fruit, mocha and violets. Finishing tannins are fine-grained and polished; this is classy Merlot indeed."
— Paul Zitarelli

18.5/20 points - Rand Sealey's Review of
Washington Wines,
www.reviewofwashingtonwines.com
December 2018

"This is a fine example of what a "value" Merlot can be. Comprised of 80% Merlot, 13% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec and 2% Petit Verdot, it offers a ruby-crimson color and attractive aromas of raspberry, black cherry and plum with scents of red roses, tobacco leaf and violets. The medium full bodied flavors are comprised of bright red fruits that are intermingled with licorice, cocoa, French roast and minerals. On the back, the wine turns chewy textured, with notes of macerated berries, roasted nuts and mocha, followed by a grainy yet smooth moderate tannin finish." — Rand Sealey

Medals & Competitions

Gold – Seattle Wine Awards, 2018

Silver – Cascadia Wine Competition, 2018

Silver – Washington State Wine Competition, 2018

Silver – Houston Rodeo Uncorked! International
Wine Competition, 2019