

# L'Ecole

## N<sup>o</sup> 41

### 2018 Merlot Estate Walla Walla Valley

#### WINEMAKER COMMENT

L'Ecole N<sup>o</sup> 41 is recognized as one of Washington State's top producers of premium Merlot and this estate vineyard blend represents our highest expression of this noble varietal. The elegance and old-world structure of Seven Hills Vineyard adds complexity to the power and minerality of Ferguson.

#### ESTATE VINEYARD

**Ferguson Vineyard 50%** - Fractured basalt

**Seven Hills Vineyard 50%** - Wind-blown loess

These prestigious vineyards are Certified Sustainable and Certified Salmon Safe.

#### VINTAGE

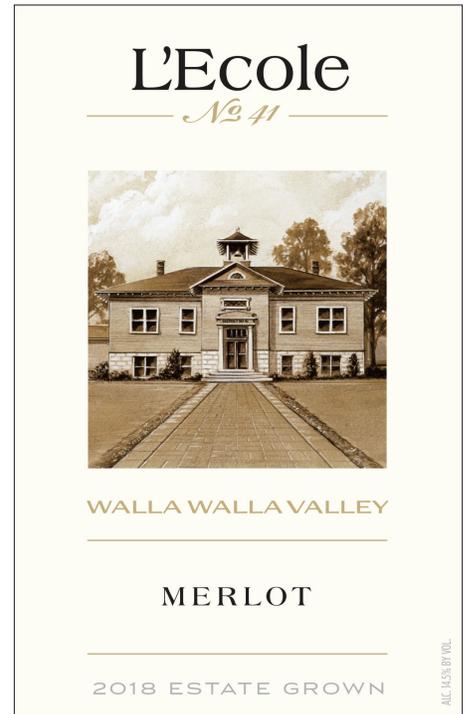
- Perfectly dry harvest weather extended hang-time resulting in rich color and vibrant fruit flavors, another great vintage for Washington State.
- A late bud-break in mid-April was followed by a warm May with rapid canopy growth. A quick, even bloom set a uniform crop. A cool June contributed to healthy berry growth.
- July and early August were warm, with occasional heat spikes. Canopies were managed to avoid sunburn and irrigation was micromanaged. Intense cluster thinning was required to control yields.
- Veraison tracked 2017 in Walla Walla and was slightly ahead in other regions of the state. A brief rainfall shifted early September into cooler weather leading to two months of near-perfect weather conditions for final fruit maturity.
- Higher sugars were balanced against higher acid levels and wonderfully intense color and tannin extraction, big fruit flavors, and overall balanced structure. Another strong Washington vintage.

#### WINEMAKING

- Over 35 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 small French oak barrels, 35% new, with four rackings over 18 months.

#### TASTING NOTES

*This expressive, well-structured Merlot reveals opulent aromatics of dark cherry and blackberry, pipe tobacco, savory cedar, and roasted figs, completed with a touch of sage. Its ripe rich texture is laced with delicate graphite notes, along with bitter chocolate and plum, grounded with ample polished tannins.*



#### HARVEST DATA

Harvest Dates	SEPTEMBER 12 - OCTOBER 5, 2018
Average tons/acre	3.8
Average Brix	25.4°
Average pH	3.33
Average Acidity	5.9 g/L

#### WINE DATA

Composition	84% MERLOT, 12% CABERNET FRANC, 4% CABERNET SAUVIGNON
pH	3.67
Total Acidity	6.2 g/L
Alcohol	14.5%
Bottling Date	FEBRUARY 21, 2020
Release Date	APRIL 2021
Case Production	1,070