

L'Ecole

N^o 41

2020 Merlot Estate Walla Walla Valley

WINEMAKER COMMENT

L'Ecole N^o 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 VINEYARDS

Seven Hills Vineyard 52% - Wind-blown loess

Ferguson Vineyard 48% - Fractured basalt

These prestigious vineyards are Certified Sustainable and Certified Salmon Safe.

VINTAGE

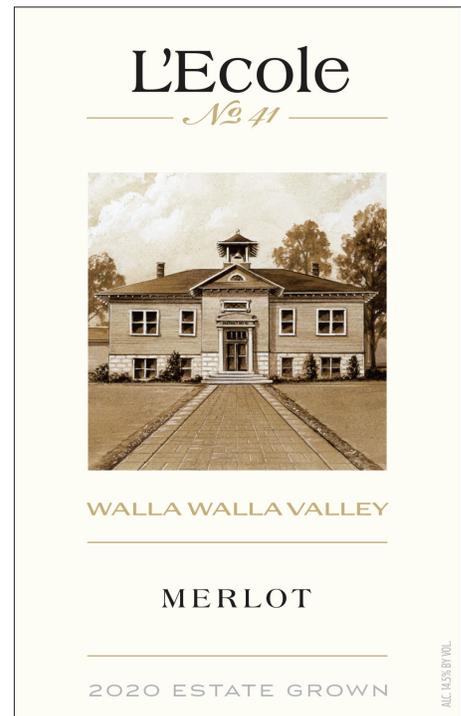
- An easy, mild growing season combined with low yields and a prolonged harvest resulted in wines with wonderful balance, color, and vibrant fruit.
- A normal but quick mid-April bud break was followed by warm spring weather. Freeze events in late 2019 lowered bud fertility, combined with rain and wind during June bloom, which resulted in unusually low yields.
- Heat accumulation tracked the long-term average with veraison on time in early August.
- Older CA/OR wildfire smoke briefly settled into the Columbia Basin the 2nd week of September. Fortunately, the impact on our grapes was negligible since most of the fruit was at a later stage of maturity, combined with the nature of it being older smoke. The diffused sunlight and cooler temperatures slowed ripening, extending harvest well into October.
- The long growing season combined with low yields resulted in wonderful balance, length, and aromatics in the whites, and concentrated flavor, color, texture, and structure in the reds.

WINEMAKING

- 40 years of meticulous vineyard management and winemaking experience are fundamental to the quality of our wines and reputation for excellence.
- 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 entirely to small French oak barrels, 35% new, over 18 months.

TASTING NOTES

This expressive Merlot reveals opulent aromatics of dark cherry, cassis, fresh Mission figs, savory cedar, and tobacco complemented with violets and a touch of sage. Its concentrated texture is laced with basalt-driven minerality, and notes of graphite, dark chocolate, and spice complemented by refined tannins leading to a fresh and focused finish.



HARVEST DATA

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Harvest Dates | SEPTEMBER 10 - OCTOBER 20, 2020 |
| Average tons/acre | 2.8 |
| Average Brix | 25.4° |
| Average pH | 3.39 |
| Average Acidity | 5.72 g/L |

WINE DATA

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Composition | 81% MERLOT, 14% CABERNET FRANC, 5% CABERNET SAUVIGNON |
| pH | 3.61 |
| Total Acidity | 6.1 g/L |
| Alcohol | 14.5% |
| Bottling Date | MAY 13, 2022 |
| Release | FALL 2022 |
| Case Production | 1,000 |