



LADY HILL WINERY
True Northwest

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2016 **LADY HILL MERLOT** Columbia Valley AVA

WINEMAKER NOTE

You'll be hard pressed to find a Merlot from Washington State blended from three such dynamic vineyards. Purity of fruit and mineral, herbaceous and elegant, plush and powerful; three very different manifestations of the same cultivar all rolled into our 2016 Lady Hill Merlot.

VINEYARDS

Red Willow Vineyard (42%), Slide Mountain Vineyard (29%), Taptail Vineyard (29%)

CELLAR

A moderate winter in E. Washington provided an early push into the 2016 vintage, with bloom and bud break two weeks ahead of historical averages. Everyone seemed to gear up for another in the string of hot vintages, but Bacchus and mother nature had other ideas. A June cool down persisted throughout the summer, which, along with increased plantings and monstrous cluster and berry size produced one of the heaviest crops the state has ever seen. Despite this being a logistical nightmare for producers, quality remained very high and lingering summer temperatures allowed plenty of hangtime to ripen flavors to match winemaking style. In the end, merlot is one of the earliest ripeners, with all three sites coming off the vine by the third week in September.

VARIETAL: 100% Merlot

PRODUCTION: 252 cases

ALCOHOL: 14.5% by volume

PROFILE: With maroon to mahogany hues, you'll find a merlot that did not suffer the color setbacks of increased berry size. Classic plump, luscious berry notes and dark plum ooze from the glass supported by a push from vanilla bean and butterscotch. Herbaceous highlights of tobacco leaf and fennel adds the complexity this merlot needs to escape the "Sideways curse." Sweet up front, with a weighted but balanced mid to finish, and a juicy, lingering finish creating a masterful pairing for shepherd's pie, grilled lamb burgers.

PAIRING: Shepherd's pie, grilled lamb burgers and roasted vegetables with fresh herbs