



## 2001 *Merlot* ESTATE GROWN ~ COLUMBIA VALLEY

- **COMPOSITION:** 88% Merlot, Gordon Bros. Estate, 6% Syrah, Gordon Bros. Estate and 6% Cabernet Sauvignon, Gordon Bros. Estate
- **AGING:** 18 months in French Oak
- **BOTTLED:** March 4-5, 2003
- **pH:** 3.86
- **TA:** 0.625g / L
- **ALCOHOL:** 13.7%
- **PRODUCTION:** 6,656 cases

### AWARDS & *Reviews*

#### **Wine Press Northwest – 2004 Platinum Judging – Platinum**

“This was the top Merlot in the Platinum thanks to aromas of baker’s chocolate and smokey cherries and flavors of blackberries and rich coffee with a hint of white pepper on the finish. Well-managed tannins give this approachability now.

#### **Dallas Morning News – Gold Medal**

#### **Tasters Guild 17th Annual International Wine Competition – Silver Medal**

#### **Wine Spectator - 88**

“Firm and Spicy, with mature overtones of dried orange peel and musky floral notes around a core of cherry and espresso flavors.”

### VINTAGE

2001 started with a mild and short winter, resulting in no vine damage. Spring, although a little cooler than average, led to a complete flowering. The absence of rain made for a beautiful fruit set. Summer temperatures were average and rainfall was below average, resulting in very even and predictable ripening. September was warmer than average. This short blast of heat made for great structure, complex flavors and ripeness.

### WINEMAKING

After picking, the Estate Grown Merlot was gently crushed into stainless steel fermenters. The skins and juice were allowed to “cold soak” for a number of days prior to the addition of cultured yeast. This process creates darker colors and enhances the ripeness of flavors. After fermentation was completed, the finished wine was drawn off and the skins were pressed. 100% of the vintage was aged in small oak barrels, the majority being from French forests, for 18 months. Gentle racking of the barrels allowed for the removal of solids without filtration. After aging, a small amount of Gordon Brothers Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah were blended into the 2001 Merlot to add spiciness and character.

### WINEMAKER COMMENTS

Ruby red and full of life, this Merlot shows generous toasted oak and ripe berries on the nose. Hints of cherry flow over layers of plum, leather and chocolate. A bright core of blackberry, chocolate and light cedar tones linger on the finish. Serve this Merlot with veal, lamb and red pastas for a memorable meal!