

Chateau Ste Michelle

2011 INDIAN WELLS MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

“The Indian Wells Merlot offers ripe berry fruit aromas and jammy flavors typical of Wahluke Slope reds. This is a full bodied style of warm climate Merlot with a round, supple finish. We added Wahluke Slope syrah to enhance the mouthfeel and rich fruit character. I call this my pasta wine!”

Bob Bertheau

Bob Bertheau, Winemaker

VINTAGE

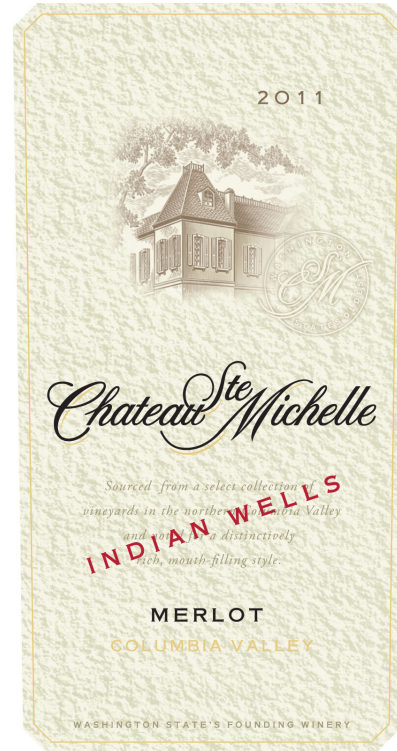
- Cool temperatures during spring delayed bud break and bloom by three to four weeks.
- Consistently warm summer temperatures lengthened the ripening period, resulting in harvest starting three weeks later than normal.
- Without the growing season’s typical temperature spikes that surpass 100° F, grapes ripened evenly with the required sugar levels and ideal physiological maturity.

VINEYARDS

- This Merlot is sourced predominately from vineyards throughout the Wahluke Slope in Washington state, including our Indian Wells Vineyard.
- Our most northern growing area, the Wahluke Slope is bordered on both the west and the south by the Columbia River.
- Indian Wells vineyard is a very warm site with a long growing season.
- The region is a consistent producer of high quality, ripe fruit, yielding wine with intense color and flavor.

WINEMAKING

- Grapes were sorted with a new grape receiving system and MOG (materials other than grapes) separation system that transfers fruit to the fermenters in a more gentle and pure method, allowing for greater varietal expression and softer mouthfeel.
- Gentle pumpovers were used to extract optimal flavor and color and minimize harsh tannins. The pumpovers can vary by block, tank and day of fermentation. Every ferment is tasted daily to evaluate the evolution of the tannins, modify extraction techniques and find the right moment to drain the wine off of its skins.
- Aged in American and French oak for 16 months.
- Frequent aerative racking took place during barrel aging to soften tannins and enhance mouthfeel.



TECHNICAL DATA

Alcohol	13.5%
Total Acidity	0.55g/100 ml
pH	3.80
Blend	85% Merlot 15% Syrah

FOOD PAIRINGS

Foods	hearty pastas, arroz con pollo, flank steak salad
Herbs	Basil, oregano

