



2011 Traditions Merlot

Overview

In 1997, we planted our first vines in the Eastern Washington AVAs of the Columbia Valley and Wahluke Slope. At first glance, Eastern Washington is not your typical wine country. It's a remote, windswept, high desert dotted with sagebrush and tumbleweeds. But our family had been farming here since the mid-1950s, and we believed the region's moderate temperatures, low rainfall and sandy soils were ideal for grapes. Eight years later we started producing our own wines from the best vineyard blocks. Today, winemaker Joshua Maloney is handcrafting an award-winning spectrum of Milbrandt Vineyards wines from across our renowned estate vineyards.

-Butch & Jerry Milbrandt

Vineyards

Our bottling of the 2011 Traditions Merlot is comprised of wine of grapes harvested from four Wahluke Slope vineyards in the heart of the Columbia Valley. The vines are planted on south-facing slopes to increase sun exposure in the summer and promote air circulation in the winter. Though the climate here is typically warm enough during the day to fully ripen grapes, it is also cool enough at night to ensure bright acids and firm tannins. In 2011, a cool and wet spring delayed bloom and led to a light fruit set on the vines. The summer was mild, but transitioned into a long Indian summer with warm temperatures and an abundance of sunshine through October. The result was an exceptional vintage with beautiful color, flavor intensity and perfectly balanced acidity.

Tasting Notes

Our 2011 Merlot is round and rich with classic aromas and flavors of black cherry, plum, sage and a hint of clove. Broad and generous with supple tannins and a long finish make our Merlot a delicious pairing with Cornish game hen, shepherd's pie and gnocchi.

Words from our Winemaker

"Eastern Washington is known for producing some of the best Merlot in the world. Our Merlot is deep and lush with supple tannins and flavors of blackberry, plum and a touch of vanilla."

-Joshua Maloney

Composition	93% Merlot 4% Malbec 3% Cabernet Sauvignon
AVA	Columbia Valley
Vineyards	Wahluke Slope Clifton Bluff Sundance Clifton Clifton Hill Northridge
Harvest Date	October 2011
Alcohol	13.5%
pH	3.66
TA	5.4 g/L
Aging/Oak	100% barrel aged in 20% new French & American oak