

Chateau Ste Michelle

CANOE RIDGE ESTATE

2010 MERLOT

HORSE HEAVEN HILLS

TASTING NOTES

“Our Canoe Ridge Estate Merlot presents flavors of ripe cherries and dark fruit followed by dusty old-world tannins. With increased vine age, this wine is showing more depth, richness and layers of flavor. Try pairing this wine with Italian food.”



Bob Bertheau, Head Winemaker

VINTAGE

- 2010 was one of the coolest vintages on record and a year that tested our winemaker's patience.
- The ripening season was marked by a mild spring and cool summer, resulting in harvest starting three weeks later than normal.
- Fortunately, a warmer September and October allowed grapes to ripen to maturity.
- The cooler weather conditions resulted in grapes reaching optimum flavor ripeness to desired sugar levels.

VINEYARDS

- Planted in 1991, the vineyard at Canoe Ridge Estate lies on a steep south-facing wind-swept slope on the bank of the Columbia River in Washington's Horse Heaven Hills AVA.
- The site's proximity to the river protects it from temperature extremes, allowing uniform ripening and excellent color development.
- Soils are sandy with bits of cobblestone and have low water-holding capacity, enabling precise control of vine growth through drip irrigation and canopy management.
- The site typically enjoys an early bud break and a long growing season.

WINEMAKING

- Grapes were sorted with a new grape receiving system and MOG (materials other than grapes) separation system that gets fruit to the fermenters in a much more gentle and pure fashion, allowing for better varietal expression and softer mouthfeel.
- Ripe grapes were destemmed and inoculated with various strains of yeast to maximize complexity, including natural yeasts.
- Daily gentle pumpovers were used to extract 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 for 18 months in 19% new French Oak and 41% new American oak.
- Frequent aerative racking took place during barrel aging to soften tannins and enhance mouthfeel.



TECHNICAL DATA

<i>Alcohol</i>	14.5%
<i>Total Acidity</i>	0.46g/100ml
<i>pH</i>	3.87
<i>Blend</i>	89% Merlot, 11% Cabernet Sauvignon
<i>Cases Produced</i>	6,000

FOOD PAIRINGS

<i>Foods</i>	lamb, pasta, beef, fowl
<i>Herbs</i>	basil, oregano, rosemary

