



Chateau Ste. Michelle

2011 ARTIST SERIES MERITAGE

THE ART OF WINE

Chateau Ste. Michelle's Artist Series Meritage red wine celebrates the inspired collaboration between artisan winemaking and fine art. The 2011 featured artwork by internationally recognized artist Bratsa Bonifacho, explores the tension between the logical, linear scripting of virus program and their capacity for destruction. His large scale oil paintings imitate the chaotic effects of computer viruses by scrambling letters and messages. For more information about the artist, visit fosterwhite.com.

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

- More than half of the fruit came from our Cold Creek Vineyard (69%), one of the oldest and warmest sites in Washington.
- Planted in 1973, the low yielding old vines of Cold Creek produce small clusters and small berries, resulting in intense varietal flavors and deep color.
- Fruit the Horse Heaven Hills (25%) and Wahluke Slope (6%) AVAs also contributed to the blend.

WINEMAKING

- Fermented in small lots for maximum flexibility during blending.
- Daily gentle pumpovers were used to extract optimal flavor and color and minimize harsh tannins.
- The pumpovers 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 20 months in French oak and American oak, 66% percent new.

TASTING NOTES

"I found it remarkable, working with the coldest vintage in my ten years in Washington state, that the elegance and finesse I strive for in this wine came from the warmer sites that are typically reserved for bigger and bolder styles. A cold year plus warmer sites equals exceptional elegance. This wine offers layers of black cherry and spice aromas and flavors."

Bob Bertheau

Bob Bertheau, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

Total acidity	0.58g /100ml
pH	3.78
Alcohol	14.5%
Blend	72% Cabernet Sauvignon 25% Merlot 2% Cabernet Franc 1% Malbec
Cases produced	2,187