

# REININGER 2015 Merlot *Walla Walla Valley*



## DESCRIPTION

“2015 brought record temperatures along with our earliest harvest ever, beginning in late August. We experienced extreme, early summer heat and consistent hot temperatures followed by a very welcomed cooling trend beginning at veraison. The results were higher than expected acidity and even ripening. Thanks to the early harvest, the Merlot was brought in with plenty of acid in equilibrium with round, cushy tannins balanced on a foundation of plush dark cherry fruit delivering our most exceptional Walla Walla Merlot of the past several vintages.

“An effusive nose brings forth intense, classic Merlot expressions of dark fruit with a floral note of dried, sweet rose petal plus a hint of incense. Opulent-focused flavors of black cherry, plum, raspberry and lots of baked fig are complemented with thin layers of judicious oak displaying notes of cedar and sandalwood with a mild drop of caramel sprinkled with cocoa powder.” - *Chuck Reininger, Winemaker*

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

**Blend:** 96% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon

**Cooperage:** 68% American, 32% French (58% new)

**pH:** 3.75

**TA:** 6.4 g/L

**Alc.:** 14.2%

**Bottled:** July 2017

**Production:** 230 cases

## THE VINEYARDS

**PEPPER BRIDGE** Pepper Bridge Vineyard dates back to 1991 when its first 10 acres were planted of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Known for its outstanding reputation with winemakers throughout the Walla Walla Valley and Washington State, Pepper Bridge has some of the most sought after grapes over 200 total acres.

**SEVEN HILLS** One of the first commercially planted vineyards in the Walla Walla Valley, Seven Hills dates back to 1982. Seven Hills has expanded to more than 235 acres and is the source of fruit for many wineries across the state and Walla Walla Valley. In 2004, *Wine & Spirit* included Seven Hills in the top ten greatest vineyards in the world. Seven Hills has excellent soil and air drainage for the 12 varietals that grow on its soil, and is one of the most technically advanced in the industry. Seven Hills Vineyard is a member of Vinea, the Winegrowers' Sustainable Trust, and is certified Salmon Safe.

**XL** At a maximum elevation of 1,250 feet, XL is one of the highest planted vineyards in the Walla Walla Valley. XL's unique soil type and steep slopes provide vines with excellent air and water drainage, and can sustain a wide range of grape varietals. XL Vineyard focuses on sustainable farming practices, from custom compost and soil composition testing to water quality and critter control, and is a voluntary member of Vinea, the Winegrowers' Sustainable Trust, and is certified Salmon Safe.

## HISTORY OF MERLOT

Since the inaugural 1997 vintage, Chuck has gained great acclaim in his Walla Walla Valley Merlot. In fact one of his first vintages of Merlot (1999) scored 90 points from *Wine Spectator*, *Wine Enthusiast*, and *Wine & Spirits*. As the years have gone by Chuck has scored 90 points or higher on over 12 vintages of Walla Walla Merlot, and has been included in “Top 20 Wines of Washington State” in *Food & Wine* (2003) and the “Top 50 Wines of 2014” in *Seattle Times* for the 2010 vintage.

## REININGER WINERY

REININGER Winery, located in the heart of the Walla Walla Valley, specializes in crafting elegant and finely structured wines from hand-harvested, ultra premium grapes. From our first release in 1997, REININGER wines have possessed a unique quality derived from the winemaker's awareness of and passion for the natural elements that make great wines.

[www.reiningerwinery.com](http://www.reiningerwinery.com)