



ELEPHANT MOUNTAIN VINEYARD 2016 MERLOT RATTLESNAKE HILLS

Varietal Composition:	100% Merlot
Appellation:	Rattlesnake Hills
Bottled:	August 15, 2018
Technical Data:	Alc. 15.0% by vol.; RS: 0.01%; TA: 5.80 g/L; pH: 3.54
Cases Produced:	198
Production & Aging:	Aged 21 months in 40% new French Oak

THE VINTAGE

Warmer temperatures in Spring accelerated an early start to the 2016 growing season with our first crush taking place on August 22nd. Washington State experienced cooler temperatures midsummer which slowed ripening. The change in temperature controlled acid levels in the fruit while enhancing berry phenolics. It also lengthened the harvest for the season allowing our later varieties plenty of hang time and flavor development, with the last fruit being picked November 12th.

THE VINEYARD

Sourced from the award-winning Elephant Mountain Vineyards from Washington state's renowned Rattlesnake Hills AVA.

THE WINEMAKING

Throughout harvest, Winemaker Richard Batchelor worked closely with local growers and visited each vineyard to taste for maturity and ripeness to determine the precise moment to pick the fruit. Grapes were hand-harvested during the cool hours of the morning to preserve bright fruit notes. Each lot underwent a five day pre-fermentation cold soak before the tank was allowed to go through a native fermentation to dryness lasting roughly 21 days. Each lot was fermented separately and then blended before bottling to allow the tannins to meld together. To craft this wine, only the free run juice was collected and no press fraction was blended. The wine was then barrel aged for 21 months in new French Oak. For the first year this wine was stirred in barrel on its lees and racked when necessary to soften the tannins. After the first 12 months the wine was racked off the lees for clarity before blending and bottling.

TASTING NOTES

Ripe blackberry fruit aromas, hint of olive and subtle anise notes. A clove and tobacco character take the wine to a cedar and cherry leather finish.

AWARDS

Gold: 91pts, 2019 West Coast Wine Competition

