

# Cascade Cliffs Vineyard & Winery

## Bordeaux Club – Winter, 2019

**C**reetings and Happy Holidays! Enclosed is your December Bordeaux Club, a bold and cheerful mix of our wines that have roots in the Bordeaux region of France. Any celebration of Cabernet Sauvignon and/or Merlot must have consideration of this classic wine region, where these two varietals – as well as Cabernet Franc, Malbec, and Petite Verdot – began their journey to stardom. Here in Washington State, these varietals have also reached the mountain top of both popularity and quality. Cabernet Sauvignon, for instance, is the most planted red varietal in the state, providing hundreds of wineries with the key grape to compete in the world stage.

Our history with these varietals begins here on our vineyard in 1986, when Merlot was the first to be planted. Later in 1998, Cabernet Sauvignon was added to the vineyard. We have made single varietal Cabernet and Merlot for decades now, including Reserve bottles and blends of the two. We've also incorporated Malbec into our wine program, and will be bottling a gorgeous, single varietal version in January 2020. We've also been sourcing high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Malbec from vineyard sites in the Horse Heaven Hills, Wahluke Slope, and Red Mountain AVAs. The up-coming 2018 Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon is also part of our current Futures offering



to club members and promising to be one of our very best Cabs to date...

This winter package focuses on the "foundation" of this wine category: Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Both varietals have played a huge part in the history of wine, not just in France, but around the globe. We've included four of our 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon, four 2017 Merlot, and four 2016 Cabernet-Merlot blends. Each wine has its own character, yet each shows a common thread to one another. There is a good reason why these two grapes are so often blended, as Cab typically provided the "muscle" and

tannic structure of the wine, and Merlot adds a softer, plush element to the blend. The flavor, aroma, and texture provided by both creates a natural balance, harmonious and magical.

We hope you enjoy these wines now, and in years to come! Thank you all for your continued support and we send you our very best wishes for the season.

~All of us at Cascade Cliffs Vineyard & Winery

# Tasting Notes

## 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon

**The Facts:** There's good reason why this noble varietal is (still) the king of wine grapes: adaptable to multiple climates and soil types, complex and intense flavors, and strong tannic structure for long-term aging all work together to create a wine known to just about everyone. Fantastic versions of this grape can be tasted from France, Italy,



Spain, Australia, South Africa, Chile, Argentina, California, Oregon, and *of course*, Washington. Our latest vintage of Cab has the classic flavors of black cherry and cassis, but with a bit more restraint and grip than previous vintages. In other words, a more “old world” style that’s lovely right now but will reveal more layers in years to come. Pair this with beef tenderloin, French onion soup, and aged dry cheeses.

~**Vineyard source/AVA:** 60% Cascade Cliffs (Columbia Valley), 40% McKinley Springs (Horse Heaven Hills).

~**Cooperage:** American Oak, 12 months

~**Aging:** Mid to long-term (drink now to 2028).

## 2016 Cabernet-Merlot

**The Facts:** Technically, this wine could be labeled as a Reserve wine since it spent more than 1 year in the barrel. But it is a soft, supple expression of these two classic Bordeaux varietals, offering layers of flavors from start to finish yet mild tannins on the finish. Blended from 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, this is a great wine to have

for everyday use and will hold up to heavier dishes like grilled ribeye and roasted potatoes.

~**Vineyard source/AVA:** 100% Destiny Ridge (Horse Heaven Hills).

~**Cooperage:** American Oak, 18 months.

~**Aging:** Mid to long-term (drink now to 2025).

## 2017 Merlot

**The Facts:** The first vines planted on our vineyard were, in fact, Merlot. And why not? A known quantity to almost every wine drinker, relatively easy to manage in the field, and a versatile grape in the winery, Merlot is always welcome to both grape growers and winemakers. In fact, some of Washington state’s most celebrated wine is, you guessed it, Merlot. Most American Merlot tends to be overly soft (read: flabby) but we like to make ours full yet crisp and bright on the finish. Our latest vintage shows off red plum and berry flavors with a nice balance of acid and tannin. Pair this wine with grilled pork chops and roasted vegetables and/or chicken.

~**Vineyard source/AVA:** 50% Cascade Cliffs (Columbia Valley), 50% Milbrandt (Wahluke Slope).

~**Cooperage:** American Oak, 12 months.

~**Aging:** Mid to long-term (drink now to 2027).

