



2003

**G|E|N|E|S|I|S**

*by Hogue Cellars*

*Merlot*



## THE NUMBERS

- › **Appellation:** Columbia Valley
- › **Varietal Percentage:** 85% Merlot, 12% Syrah, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon
- › **Harvest Brix:** 26.8°
- › **TA:** 0.66 g/100 ml
- › **pH:** 3.60
- › **Alcohol:** 14.5%
- › **Release Date:** October 2006

## Columbia Valley, Washington

### THE WINE

With generous raspberry and caramel, this warm, dense wine is a fine example of why Washington has been recognized as an exceptional Merlot-producing region. The 2003 expresses dense ripe black cherry aromatics with complexing menthol and earth tones to round it out. Pair this wine with hearty meat dishes such as a glazed rack of lamb or beef stew. It would also go well with a finely aged cheddar or marinated, grilled Portobello mushrooms.

### VINTAGE AND VINEYARDS

The growing season of 2003 was the warmest of the last decade. The total heat unit accumulation (April 1 to October 31) was 15% higher than the average. A fairly cool spring was followed by a long, warm summer. It was also a dry year, with only 2 inches of rain compared to the 70-year average of 3½ inches. Perfect harvest conditions in September resulted in a vintage of great quality. In 2003 most of our Genesis Merlot (79%) came from the Fries Vineyard on the Wahluke Slope. Another ten percent of the fruit came from the Andrews and Rowell Vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

Our Genesis Merlot was harvested the first three weeks of September 2003. The lots were monitored carefully during the early extractive fermentation and pressed when the color was maximized but before the wine became too tannic. We then finished primary (alcoholic) and secondary (malo-lactic) fermentations in-tank for most of the wines, prior to being barreled-down. The wines were aged in American oak for 21 months, 35% of which was new oak and no barrels being older than four years. The wines were blended and bottled in August 2005.