

# NOVELTY HILL

## 2020 MERLOT

### TASTING NOTES

“Polished and focused, with enticing aromas of wild cherry, cocoa, and vanilla. Flavorful layers of fresh raspberry, juicy plum, and ripe black cherry stretch across a supple, deeply textured mid-palate, leaving a rich, elegant impression.”

- Mike Januik, Winemaker

### VINTAGE

The 2020 growing season will be remembered for low yields, warm summer weather, and sufficient hang time to produce wines with intense aromas and concentrated flavors. Bud break began in mid-April, then conditions progressed at a moderate pace for the next six weeks before temperatures dipped in early June. Warm weather returned in July, and temperatures stayed hot through the summer. Conditions were dry, allowing growers to control vine vigor through irrigation. Grapes were slow to ripen in early September, but by mid-month, the Columbia Valley settled into its usual pattern of warm days and cool nights. Ideal harvest conditions lasted into mid-October, allowing vines to ripen light crop levels beautifully.

### VINEYARD

The Columbia Valley is a diverse growing region that provides a wide range of fruit expressions to yield multi-layered wines. For this Merlot, winemaker Mike Januik relied predominately on grapes from Novelty Hill's Stillwater Creek Estate on the Royal Slope of the Frenchman Hills, then blended a few select lots from top vineyards around the Columbia Valley to enhance the finished wine's complexity and richness.

### WINEMAKING

- Gentle pump-overs during fermentation were used to submerge the skins and extract color and flavor from the grapes
- Gravity-racked every five months to soften and clarify the wine
- Aged 19 months in new and used barrels, 75% French oak, 25% American oak

AVA	Columbia Valley
Blend	95% Merlot 3% Cabernet Sauvignon 2% Malbec
Cases	3,922
Alcohol	14.4%
pH	3.76
Total Acidity	0.52 g/100 ml

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