

Mark Ryan

WINERY

LITTLE SISTER Merlot | Columbia Valley | 2021

WINEMAKING NOTES

The merlot for the 2021 Little Sister is a combination to two premium vineyards: Quintessence on Red Mountain and Red Willow in the upper Yakima Valley. The merlot from Quintessence was planted in 2011, on a south facing slope, in soils consisting of fractured basalt and gravel with a light dusting of fine Loess. The merlot from Red Willow was planted in 1993 on a steep westerly facing slope, in soils that combine 16"-20" of gravel mixed with calcareous clay over volcanic pumice. Bud break and bloom in 2021 were earlier than normal. The weather was hot throughout much of the growing season. Like 2020, the 2021 vintage produced exceptionally low yields. Berries were remarkably small, and clusters were extremely light. This led to wines with amazing depth and intensity. Each block was hand harvested the third week in September. The wine was fermented in a combination of 1.5, 2 and 5-ton open top fermenters for 7-10 days. The wine is lightly pressed to barrel, where it finishes primary and malolactic fermentation and is aged for 21 months in 60% new French oak. The wine was racked twice prior to bottling.

TASTING NOTES

On the nose, engaging aromas of dark berries, chocolate, sweet tobacco, and spice. Silky finesse and concentrated on the palate where ripe tannins intermix with juicy flavors of black cherry, violet, blueberry, spice, and leather. Delicious!

BLEND

100% Merlot

BARREL

60% new French oak
40% used French oak
21 months in barrel

PRODUCTION

122 cases

RELEASE

October 2023

APPELLATION

Columbia Valley

MATURITY WINDOW

2023-2039

VINEYARDS

Red Willow, Quintessence

ACCOLADES

2021: 95 VinePair
2020: 92 WE
2019: 93 WE, 91 Tanzer
2018: 94 WE, 93 WA
2017: 94 JD, 93 WE
2016: 94 JD

ALCOHOL

14.7%

UPC

850518006199



Founded in 1999 by Mark Ryan McNeilly, **MARK RYAN WINERY** produces limited quantities of highly-sought after wines, crafted intentionally for their quality and potential. We partner with vineyards of the highest merit to produce an award-winning lineup that represents our winemaking style and authentic varietal character. Our passion to produce the best wines possible inspires us to make these wines for you.

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