



PEPPER BRIDGE WINERY

2000 Merlot Walla Walla Valley

Winemaker Notes:

Our second vintage of Merlot is extremely exciting since this is the first vintage crafted entirely at our state-of-the-art, gravity-feed winery. We always give extra care to our hand-harvested grapes, but this vintage also received very gentle handling at the winery. Our proprietary shaker table allows us to hand-sort each individual cluster before the grapes move to the fermentation tanks. Fermented wine then gently flows by gravity to our caves thirty-eight feet below ground level.

The 2000 Pepper Bridge Merlot is bright, featuring deep flavors of cherry, cassis and violet with an intriguing hint of roasted coffee, spice and a bit of licorice. The wine shows our trademark elegant style with a firmly sculpted framework of acid and polished tannins. It aged 19 months in 66% new and 34% seasoned oak, 95% French.

The 2000 Vintage:

The 2000 vintage was like that rare child who gives no trouble as a youth and matures to do great things as an adult. The spring weather was clear and calm for bloom and we had one burst of very warm weather in late July that set the vines up perfectly for veraison and ripening. Veraison started about August 6 and harvest began with Merlot at Seven Hills Vineyard on September 20 and finished with Cabernet Sauvignon at Pepper Bridge Vineyard on October 16.

The perfect growing season gave the Walla Walla Valley a generous Merlot that is very approachable now but should age longer than you would normally expect from Merlots.

-Jean-François Pellet, Winemaker

Wine Specifics:

Varietal(s):	95.7 % Merlot, 4.3% Cabernet Sauvignon
Vineyard(s):	47.8% Pepper Bridge Vineyard, 52.2 % Seven Hills Vineyard
Appellation:	100% Walla Walla Appellation
Oak Program:	65.9% New Oak, 34.1% Used Oak 95% French Oak, 5% American Oak
Harvest Date(s):	September 18 through September 25, 2000
Brix at Harvest:	24.8
Total Acidity:	0.60g/ml
pH:	3.63
Finished Alcohol:	14.1% Vol.
Total Production:	1,115 9-liter cases
Bottling Date:	April 24, 2002
Release Date:	November 1, 2002

