



HIGHTOWER  
CELLARS

HANDPICKED

HANDSORTED

HANDMADE

**2003 Merlot**

Columbia Valley

Washington State

- 36% Alder Ridge
- 32% Pepper Bridge
- 32% Red Mountain

The 2003 Merlot is mostly Merlot with just a touch of Cabernet Franc (4%), resulting in a beautifully structured, well-integrated, complex little wine full of big, juicy cherries.

The grapes for this wine were handpicked and handsorted to ensure that only the best grapes were used. We fermented the fruit in small open-top containers no taller than they are wide to extract greater flavor and color by having more juice in contact with the grape skins. After gently pressing the wine from the skins the wine aged in small oak barrels for twenty months. During barrel aging we gravity raked the wine off its lees with a siphon. Separate lots were blended and bottled in the spring of 2005.

We produced 300 cases