



HIGHTOWER  
CELLARS

## 2016 Merlot Red Mountain AVA

- Co-Winemakers – Tim and Kelly Hightower
- Merlot 86%, Cabernet Franc 14%
- Red Mountain AVA 100% (Hightower Estate Vineyard 71%, E&E Shaw Vineyard 29%)
- New Oak 62%, Neutral Oak 48% (European 43%, American 29%, French 14%, Hungarian 14%)
- Alcohol 14.3%
- Residual Sugar <0.1g/L

Dark red fruits with subtle hints of baking spices and classic Red Mountain minerality on the nose. The flavors are very developed on the palate. It is a smooth elegant Merlot with very fine grained tannins and lovely structure.

The 2016 growing season started out even warmer than 2015, though cooler weather in June and July kept it from breaking overall heat records. This is one of many factors that likely led to an unexpected bumper crop across most of Eastern Washington, though we were very careful to thin our own fruit! Regardless if it's the weather or our forming techniques, we saw extended hang time in the fall, which gave us fantastic structure and color intensity while still maintaining great acidity and flavor. Merlot is one of the primary grapes used in Bordeaux wines, often making up the largest component of blends from the Right Bank region of Bordeaux, France. Here in Washington, Merlot is allowed to ripen on the vine much longer than is traditional in Bordeaux, which gives deeply flavored and supple fruit. A study of richness and restraint, it fits right into the Hightower portfolio!

We produced 172 cases.

*WINE ~ WITH ~ CHARACTER*

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