



HIGHTOWER
CELLARS

2015 Merlot Red Mountain AVA

- Co-Winemakers – Tim and Kelly Hightower
- Merlot 91%, Cabernet Sauvignon 9%
- Red Mountain AVA 100% (E&E Shaw Vineyard 55%, Hightower Estate Vineyard 45%)
- New Oak 57%, Neutral Oak 43% (American 36%, European 27%, French 27%, Hungarian 10%)
- Alcohol 14.3%
- Residual Sugar <0.1g/L

Merlot is the star of Bordeaux Right Bank blends. The father of Merlot is Cabernet Franc and the mother is an obscure varietal rediscovered in the early 2000s, Magdeleine Noire des Charentes. A little known fact is that in the movie *Sideways*, where they speak ill of Merlot, the Bordeaux that drunk at the end is Merlot-based Cheval Blanc.

There are two main styles of Merlot made around the world. The first, the “International Style,” waits to harvest the grapes till they are fully ripe and produces inky, full-bodied wines with velvety tannins and intense fruit flavors. The second, the traditional “Bordeaux style,” harvests the grapes earlier. We tend towards the international style, but not so much that we lose structure and balance. As we say here at Hightower, if Cabernet Sauvignon is King, then Merlot is Queen and she rules! We love the balance and regal style of our 2015 Merlot.

As much as possible, we take a non-interventionist approach to winemaking. We place great emphasis on vineyard selection, picking, pressing, and blending so that Hightower wines are naturally beautiful and free from pretense. We let the powerful and concentrated fruit from Red Mountain speak for itself. The result is a collection of well-balanced, nuanced wines that reveal something new and interesting each time you open a bottle. We like to think they’re wines with character through and through – in how they were made, how they taste, and in the connections they inspire.

We produced 274 cases.

WINE ~ WITH ~ CHARACTER

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