

SUBSTANCE

SUBSTANCE VINEYARD COLLECTION NORTHRIDGE MERLOT 2019

TASTING NOTES BY WINEMAKER CHARLES SMITH

Persistent, bold, lively. Black raspberry, fresh tobacco, forest floor, violets. True beauty seamlessly delivered. Leather, dried roses, fresh morels. Time is of the essence here and the reward is endless.



VINTAGE NOTES

The 2019 vintage was on the cooler side as it started slow with later-than-usual bud break and continued on to be fairly moderate throughout the year. Some vineyards had issues with an October freeze a bit earlier than usual, but our high-elevation vineyards have great air drainage which allows us to extend the growing season late into October without freeze. This yielded fantastic ripening and some awesome wines with incredible balance and character. Overall, we are excited about the wine produced in 2019, which has brought us more finesse, incredible flavors and lovely balance.

CURRENT & PAST SCORES

93 Points, *James Suckling*

“Aromas of plum, tobacco leaf and forest floor. Medium-to full-bodied with velvety tannins. A steady palate with notes of red cherries and milk chocolate. Very focused and balanced. Dried-floral finish. Nicely done. Best after 2024.”

91 Points, *Jeb Dunnuck*

“The 2019 Merlot Northridge Vineyard is a forward, medium-bodied, round, fruit-loaded Merlot that has lots of darker cherry and berry fruits, some earthy, smoky, meaty, and iron notes, ripe tannins, and a great finish. It’s clearly an outstanding wine and is going to offer tons of pleasure over the coming 7-8 years or so.”

92 Points, *Vinous—Owen Bargreen* (v2018)

“Bright red fruits and tobacco leaf mark the nose of this beautiful new Merlot by Charles Smith and Brennon Leighton. The 2018 Merlot Vineyard Collection Northridge offers a soft mouthfeel and silky tannins, while layers of milk chocolate, black cherry cordial and Chinese black tea flavors combine nicely with beautiful length.”

VINEYARD

Northridge Vineyard (100%)

Loamy, fine sand over silica limestone, these ancient soils above the Missoula Flood plain are some of the best to grow fruit. This site is higher elevation and has cooler evenings, which creates later ripening, lots of minerality and concentration. A hidden gem!

WINEMAKING

Varietal Breakdown: 100% Merlot

Appellation: Wahluke Slope

Production: 2.5 tons per acre, native yeast, 100% whole berry fermentation, 43 days on skins | 50% new French oak barriques, 22 months barrel-aged on lees | 840 (6 bottle) cases

Wine Analysis: 5.4 g/L titratable acidity, 3.87 pH, 14.5% alcohol, no residual sugar

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