

# Mark Ryan

WINERY

## LITTLE SISTER

Merlot | Columbia Valley | 2017



### Winemaking Notes

The combination of two world class vineyards and one of the best vintages in recent memory provided us with the opportunity to produce a remarkable merlot. The merlot from Red Willow vineyard was planted in 1989 and 1993, in ancient soils that were above the Missoula flood plain. The soils consist of 16"-20" of gravel mixed with calcareous clay over volcanic pumice and are excellent at controlling the natural vigor of the vines. The merlot from Quintessence Block 13 was planted in 2011 in soils predominately consisting of fractured basalt and gravel with a light dusting of fine Loess. This combination of soils provides excellent drainage and a diverse mineral composition. In 2017 both sites produced compact clusters with small berries leading to wonderfully rich and concentrated aromas and flavors. The wine was fermented in a combination of 1.5, 2 and 5 ton open top fermenters for 7-10 days. Every effort is made to treat the wine as gently as possible. The must is never put through pumps and gentle punch downs occur twice per day. The wine is lightly pressed to barrel, where it finishes primary and malolactic fermentation and is aged for 21 months in 89% new French oak. The wine was racked twice prior to being bottled.

### (92-94) points Jeb Dunnuck

*"From the Quintessence (84%) and Red Willow (16%) vineyards, the 2017 Merlot Little Sister (100% Merlot) is the Reserve Merlot of the estate. It's a juicy, red and black fruit-driven effort that has classic Merlot chocolate and spice characteristics, medium-bodied richness, ripe tannins, and a good finish. It's a juicy, elegant Merlot from this team that's going to benefit from a year or two in bottle and keep for a decade."*

#### BLEND

100% Merlot

#### BARREL

89% New 22mm French Chateau Ferré Thin Stave

Aged for 21 months

#### PRODUCTION

220 cases

#### RELEASE

October 2019

#### APPELLATION

Columbia Valley

#### VINEYARDS

Quintessence  
Red Willow

#### MATURITY WINDOW

2020-2029

Founded in 1999 by Mark Ryan McNeilly, **MARK RYAN WINERY** is a small winery located in Woodinville, Washington. Our goal is to produce handcrafted wines that represent the vineyard from which they come, the character of the varietal, and our style. From the vineyards to the winery, our uncompromising commitment to quality and our passion to produce the best wines possible, inspire us to make these wines for you.

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