



*Our roots run deep with half century old vines, rooted in the Golden Mile Bench's exceptional terroir. Blending sustainable vineyard practices and innovative winemaking, we craft wines of distinction that are an intensely flavoured expression of our historic vineyard.*

## Reserve Merlot BLOCK 2

Vintage: 2018 Price: \$25.99 (BC+tax) CSPC: 77347 UPC: 128260370012

Availability: Winery, online, Bench Club, private liquor stores, select restaurants

### HARVEST REPORT:

The 2018 growing season was one of the most tumultuous in the last 20 years, with Growing Degree Days (GDD) totaling 1575, essentially at the 10 year average, however the year was anything but average. The season started slowly with cool spring temperatures delaying our typical budbreak. This was followed by rapid, record setting heat in late April and May with growth going into overdrive and thus flowering occurring earlier than usual. Dry conditions during flowering brought an excellent fruit set with heavy, though well-balanced, bunch development. The early summer months were quite typical for the Okanagan – warm and dry. However, a cool, early fall slowed ripening down. The cooler than normal autumn temperatures allowed grape maturity to finish with elegant acidity, great complexity and fantastic flavour development. With conditions varying considerably throughout the year, viticulturalists needed to adapt management practices quickly, to ensure 2018 would be an exceptional year.

### WINEMAKING:

The grapes for this vintage were hand-harvested from Block 2 on our Golden Mile Bench estate vineyard. The Block is almost 25 years old, planted with vines that are Pomerol clone 181 and clone 184, and are truly coming into their own. The fruit was destemmed and left whole to gently ferment in our Italian Ganimede fermenters. After the desired aromas, colour and flavour extraction, we pressed and then encouraged malolactic fermentation. Aged for 16 months mostly in French barrels, the wine shows a harmonious integration of the fruit and oak.

### WINEMAKER SPECS:

**Harvest Date:** October 7, 2018  
**Bottling Date:** June 2020  
**Blend:** 100% Merlot  
**Ageing:** 16 months  
**Oak:** 75% French, 25% American  
**Vegan:** Yes

### TASTING NOTES:

A Merlot that is worthy of our Reserve tier, with lifted aromas of sagebrush, roasted fennel, bright cherry and light toast. The palate coalesces around cocoa, ripe cherry, and clove. Beautifully structured, with round tannins and a lengthy finish. An attractive and versatile wine that pairs well with a marbled ribeye or try a vegetarian roasted butternut squash and fennel soup with fried sage.

**Ageability:** 5-7 years  
**Alc:** 14.6% **RS:** 2.6 g/L  
**pH:** 3.9 **TA:** 5.7 g/L  
**Brix at harvest:** 24.4 average  
**Clone:** 181 & 184, Bordeaux, France

Alc: alcohol | RS: residual sugar | TA: total acidity

HESTER CREEK



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