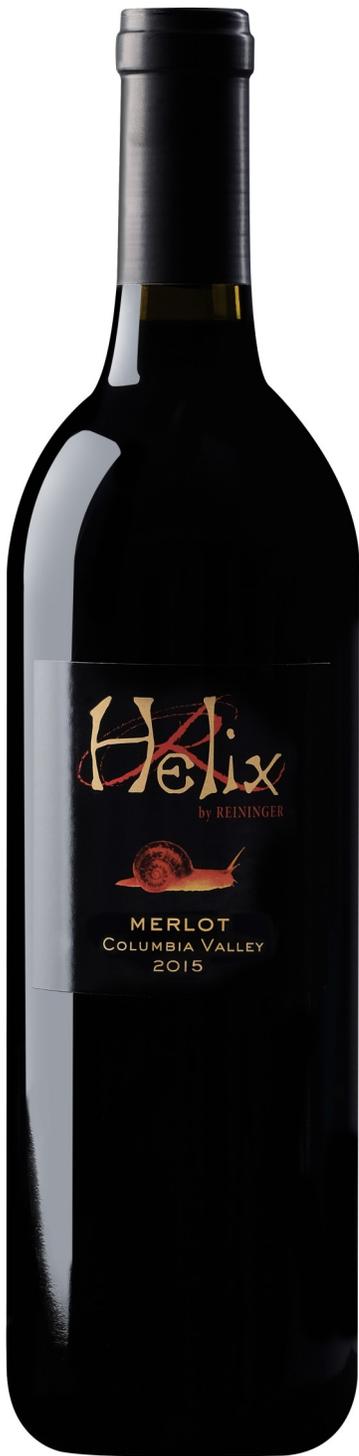


# 2015 Helix Stillwater Creek Merlot

## *Columbia Valley*



### DESCRIPTION

The 2015 vintage was surprising in three ways: 1) it was our warmest on record, 2) it was our earliest harvest, and 3) the fruit, across all varieties, possessed wonderful acidity which is atypical for hot vintages.

Our Helix 100% Stillwater Creek Merlot exhibits a bright dark ruby color with a touch of magenta. The first nose hit takes me back to my childhood with a blast of Beech-Nut Cherry gum, red plum, red currant, and a mild potpourri of violets, rose petals and wood spice. A glossy mouthfeel, supported by abundant fruit elevating acidity and fine tannins, mirrors the nose while in addition cedes black raspberry, dark cherry, boysenberry, and dark chocolate with wisps of loam and tobacco. ~*Chuck Reininger, Winemaker*

### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

**Blend:** 100% Merlot

**Cooperage:** 50% American, 33% Russian, 17% French (10% new oak)

**Vineyards:** Stillwater Creek

**Alc.:** 14.3%

**pH:** 3.56

**TA:** 6.3 g/L

**Bottled:** July 2017

**Total Cases Produced:** 295

### VINEYARD INFORMATION

**STILLWATER CREEK** Stillwater Creek Vineyard is a 235-acre site on the Royal Slope of the Frenchman Hills near Royal City. Today, Stillwater Creek Vineyard is known for having one of the most diverse clone selections in Washington State, and has quickly earned a reputation as one of Columbia Valley's top vineyards.

Because of Stillwater Creek's cooler climate, we decided to drop all the Merlot we were previously sourcing from the Wahluke Slope. Merlot typically ripens early, hitting the crush pad shortly after the hot growing season ended, and in most locations the acid would drop in the Merlot fruit. With Stillwater Creek's higher elevation and cooler climate, the Merlot can have plenty of hang time while maintaining its acid and color.

### HISTORY OF HELIX MERLOT

The first vintage of Helix Merlot was in 2003. Since that vintage, Helix has been producing a Merlot from Stillwater Creek and Bacchus Vineyard fruit. Highlights of past accolades include:

- 2004: Double Gold Medal, *Wine Press NW*; 90 points, *Wine Spectator*
- 2005 Stillwater Creek Vineyard: 92 points, *Wine Enthusiast*
- 2010: Double Gold Medal, *Wine Press NW*; Gold Medal, Seattle Wine Awards
- 2011: 91 points, *Wine Spectator*
- 2012: 91 points, *Wine Spectator*

### HELIX WINES – MORE TO EXPLORE

Helix Wines are the culmination of a long, storied family history in the Washington and Oregon wine and agriculture industries and a reflection of our family's belief that farming and winemaking is all about discovery. Helix wines are produced by the same family who create REININGER at our Walla Walla Valley winery. Named for a farmstead in Helix, Oregon, where our grandparents met, married, and farmed, Helix is truly a reflection of our family's pioneering background and strong sense of place. Since the first Helix vintage in 2002, our goal is to explore the diverse and unbounded Columbia Valley and to see for ourselves what the Columbia Valley vineyards are capable of producing.