



2003 Syrah
Ciel du Cheval Vineyard
Red Mountain

Composition:	100% Syrah
Harvest:	Sept. 5-6, 2003
Alcohol:	16.4%
pH:	3.73
Titratable Acid:	5.9 gm/litre
Residual sugar:	0.78%
Bottling:	February 5, 2005 197 cases

WINEMAKER'S NOTES:

2003 was another very warm vintage in Washington State, much like '98, '00, '01 and '02. July and August were hot, and we anticipated an unusually early harvest. Fortunately the weather cooled off in mid-September, allowing for more extended hang time. The wines from this vintage will be lush and fruit-forward with slightly higher alcohols, balanced by greater fruit intensity, tannins and excellent acidity.

At Ciel du Cheval on Red Mountain, the cane-pruned vines handled a modest crop at 2.5 — 3.1 tons per acre, with the ten-year-old roots now working into the alluvial gravel below the shallow sandy soil. This fruit came in earlier than in past years, achieving physiological maturity before the autumn weather cooled.

At harvest, the grapes were de-stemmed and gently crushed. They were fermented in 1¾-ton stainless tanks and ¾-ton Macrobins (small-lot polypropylene fermenters) following several days of cold soak, using a variety of yeast strains isolated from the Rhône valley. When complete, the wine was dejuiced through large stainless steel strainers, then gently transferred to French oak barrels. This process, rather than hard-pressing, gives us exceptionally focused, high-quality wine low in phenolic solids. It was bottled after sixteen months ageing. It's enjoyable now and should develop in the bottle for five to seven years.

A pioneer of Rhône varietals in Washington State, Winemaker Doug McCrea transforms grapes from the finest Yakima Valley, Red Mountain and Columbia Valley vineyards into wines of extraordinary depth, balance, complexity and finesse. Annual Production: 3400 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Roussanne and Counoise.

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Dedicated to Rhône Varietals

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