



2004 Syrah, Amerique Yakima Valley

Composition:	80% Syrah 20% Mourvèdre
Vineyards:	Destiny Ridge (Syrah) Ciel du Cheval (Syrah, Mourvèdre)
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	3.75
Titrateable Acid:	6.2 g/litre
Bottling:	August 3, 2005 240 cases

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

2004 was a year of many challenges. It began with a devastating freeze in January that permanently damaged many Washington vineyards, particularly in the Walla Walla valley. Fortunately, Rhône varieties are far more winter hardy than anyone would have imagined. Most of our fruit was not affected. The summer was one of the hottest on record, suggesting a very early harvest. But late August cooled and even brought some rain, which slowed sugar development while promoting good acidity and proper physiological maturity. We had a relatively normal harvest from mid-September through late October. The '04 wines are very promising; the fruit characteristics are similar to 2002 and 2003. We anticipate good complexity and intensity, with even better acid and pH ratios than prior vintages.

At harvest, the grapes were gently crushed, then fermented in small lots 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 one-, two- and three-year-old American oak barrels. The inclusion of older oak mitigates the intense, direct character often associated with American oak, resulting in a more balanced, integrated wine. Similar to an Australian Shiraz, the flavors are clean and berry-driven. The oak acts as a framework providing excellent length and structure, surrounding the intense, mouth-coating fruit. This wine should age gracefully for five to ten years.

A pioneer of Rhône varieties in Washington State, winemaker Doug McCrea transforms grapes from the finest Yakima Valley and Red Mountain vineyards into wines of extraordinary depth, balance, complexity and finesse. Annual Production: 4000 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Counoise and Roussanne.

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Dedicated to Rhône Varietals

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