



2007 Syrah
Ciel du Cheval Vineyard
Red Mountain

Composition:	100% Syrah
Harvest:	Sept. 10, 2007
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	3.81
Titrateable Acid:	6.0 gm/litre
Bottling:	August 13, 2009 177 cases

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

In 2007 the weather during bloom and fruit set was good with a warm May and June. Summer had fairly average temperatures with several heat spikes which temporarily slowed ripening. An unusually cool fall resulted in gradual ripening as the grapes took some time to develop flavors. In all, 2007 produced very good fruit purity with slightly lower pH's and soft acids following malolactic fermentation. The red wines display good color and flavor depth while the whites are somewhat restrained and elegant.

At Ciel du Cheval on Red Mountain, the fan trellised, cane-pruned vines with twelve-year-old roots are now working into the alluvial gravel below the shallow sandy soil. One of the hottest sites in Washington makes this fruit always the first we harvest. The heat produces small berries with thicker skins, resulting in deep extraction. Two different clones were used. They yielded 3.5 & 3.2 tons per acre, which for this trellising is a light crop level. Since we began bottling two single vineyard Syrahs in 1997 – a wonderful contrast we liken to “black and blue” – Ciel has consistently produced a wine classically Southern Rhône in character, with stronger tannins. It has aromas of licorice, black pepper, and spice followed by dense flavors of black cherry, tar, chocolate, anise, tobacco, black truffle, Coca-Cola™... ..hence the “black” of the duo. It finishes with great acidity, presaging its excellent cellaring potential. We expect this wine to drink well for ten to twenty years.

Harvested at 24.9° and 25.0° brix, the grapes were de-stemmed, gently crushed, then fermented in small open-top fermenters after several days of cold soak, with Rhône valley-isolate yeasts. Caps were manually punched down two or three times per day during active fermentation. When dry, the wine was dejuiced through large stainless steel strainers and gently transferred to French oak barrels, approximately 22% new. This process, rather than hard-pressing, gives us exceptionally focused, high-quality wine low in phenolic solids. It was bottled after seventeen months in barrel.

Washington's Rhône varietal pioneer, Doug McCrea transforms grapes from the finest Yakima Valley and Red Mountain vineyards into wines of extraordinary depth, balance, complexity and finesse. Annual Production: 3500 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Roussanne, Grenache Blanc, Picpoul, Cinsault, Marsanne and Counoise.

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