



2008 Counoise  
Ciel du Cheval Vineyard  
Red Mountain

|                  |                                |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Composition:     | 80% Counoise<br>20% Syrah      |
| Vineyard:        | Ciel du Cheval                 |
| Alcohol:         | 14.8%                          |
| pH:              | 3.69                           |
| Titratable Acid: | 6.5 g/l                        |
| Bottling:        | September 4, 2009<br>184 cases |

#### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

This is one of only a few bottlings of this varietal in the world. The cuttings are Beaucastel material sourced from Tablas Creek Nursery, planted for us in 1999 by Jim Holmes at his renowned Ciel du Cheval Vineyard on Red Mountain. Our primary use of these grapes is in our southern-Rhône style blend ("Sirocco"), but we are so enchanted by the Counoise that we like to bottle a small amount varietally. We normally blend in some Syrah to balance the mid-palate.

Counoise ("coon-WAHZ") is renowned for its brightness (good acidity) and explosion of red fruit aromas and flavors. The 2008 amply lives up to this reputation. It will be great with any foods where you might want a Pinot Noir.

The vintage of 2008 will be remembered for its unusually cool summer and fall temperatures, but ultimately, for very classy wines. An exceptionally long, cool and rainy spring delayed bud break for at least two weeks. Once into July, a very cool summer presaged a late year, with slower and somewhat delayed veraison. As harvest approached, ripeness and overall flavor development lagged. Sugars barely reached 24° Brix - uncommonly low. Picking was late and somewhat compressed in time; finding space for fermenting about 80% simultaneously was a challenge.

In the end we survived what was one of the most difficult vintages in twenty years! Generally medium-bodied with a transparent complexity, the whites are some of the finest ever and the reds will possess a rare "beauty" and elegant style. They should age gracefully.

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: 3500 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Roussanne, Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Picpoul, Cinsault and Counoise.

"It displays exotic aromas of wild raspberry, mulberry, oriental perfumes (jasmine, sandalwood) and violets. The vivid, supple fruit flavors reverberate on the palate, with a backdrop of licorice, cocoa, roasted berries, Red Mountain minerals and touches of crème brûlée and orange peel. The finish is effortless, accented by a dusting of coriander and nutmeg on the ripe tannin finish. **19/20 points.**"

- Rand Sealey, Review of Washington Wines.

WASHINGTON STATE'S PREMIER RHÔNE VARIETAL WINERY

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