



## 2008 Mourvèdre Yakima Valley

Composition:	76% Mourvèdre 20% Syrah 4% Grenache
Vineyards:	Ciel du Cheval, Red Mountain Elephant Mountain, Yakima Sugarloaf, Yakima Valley
Alcohol:	14.9%
pH:	3.85
Titrateable Acid:	5.6 grams/litre
Bottling:	June 9, 2010 — 296 cases

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Mourvèdre is gaining great respect and desirability in Washington State. The vines are from Beaucastel stock via Tablas Creek nurseries, planted at Ciel du Cheval on Red Mountain and at Sugarloaf, our collaboration with Joe Hattrup located at the opposite, western-most end of the Yakima Valley near his Elephant Mountain Vineyard. Both sites are hot enough to mature this characteristically late-ripening variety. In the beginning our purpose in planting Mourvèdre was for our southern-Rhône style blend ("Sirocco"), but we couldn't resist bottling a small quantity as a single varietal. It has proved to be a very popular decision! It is our single most popular bottling, particularly on restaurant wine lists.

Mourvèdre is renowned for its meaty, smoky richness that adds backbone to the blends of Châteauneuf du Pape. In its native Spain, where it is named Monastrell, it is second only to Grenache in importance. When brought to the New World it was renamed Mataro — three names for the same grape. If planted in a proper site, Washington Mourvèdre is dense and velvety with flavors of leather, game, truffles, earth, spice, and red fruit. The inherent smokiness comes from the vine, not from any oak it sees; we use only French oak barriques, and only about 20% new. While adaptable to a wide variety of dishes, this wine screams out for venison, wild boar, osso buco, or smoked meats.

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 and Red Mountain 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 Cunoise.

**Double-Gold Medal, 2011 Seattle Wine Awards**

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