



## 2008 Syrah Yakima Valley

Composition:	100% Syrah
Vineyards:	Ciel du Cheval Vineyard, Red Mountain Boushey Grande Côte Vineyard, Yakima Valley Elephant Mountain Vyd., Yakima Sugarloaf Vineyard, Yakima
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	3.83
Titrateable Acid:	5.9 gm/litre
Bottling:	September 2, 2009; 454 cases

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Our 2008 Yakima Valley Syrah is a blend of grapes from four outstanding Yakima Valley vineyards. This year we introduce fruit from the newly-planted Sugarloaf Vineyard located at the westernmost tip of the valley. We're very excited about the prospects of this new site. After destemming and gentle crushing (just enough to pop the berries) it was fermented in small batches of  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1- $\frac{3}{4}$  tons each. We use open top fermenters with a manual punch down of the cap twice or three times per day during active fermentation. When dry the wine was dejuiced, rather than pressed, and transferred to barrel. It was aged eleven months in French oak, approximately 20% new.

Since we began the Syrah trend in Washington it has exploded in popularity - from about ten acres in 1997 to about 4000 today! Ours is handled very carefully, developing intense berry and black cherry flavors without over extraction or heavy tannins. It has licorice, cedar and mushrooms on the nose and finishes with black pepper and, particularly in 2008, great acidity. Our goal is to achieve a balance between New World intensity and Old World elegance. It will cellar well - ten years or more.

Washington's 2008 vintage 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 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: 3500 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Roussanne, Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Picpoul, Cinsault and Cunoise.

**Gold Medal, Seattle Wine Awards**

WASHINGTON STATE'S PREMIER RHÔNE VARIETAL WINERY

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