



2009 Grenache Yakima Valley

Composition:	80% Grenache 20% Syrah
Vineyards:	Sugar Loaf Vineyard, Yakima Valley Boushey Vineyard, Yakima
Harvest:	September 30, 2009
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	4.0
Titrateable Acid:	4.8 grams/litre
Bottling:	March 28, 2013 123 cases

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

We produced several vintages of Grenache in the early nineties, and a blend with Syrah called "Tierra del Sol." The vines used for those early bottlings were unfortunately lost in the big freeze of 1996. We have now replanted at several sites that are more winter-resistant, allowing us to return Grenache to our lineup. Our primary use of these grapes is in our southern-Rhône blend ("Sirocco"). But we enjoy the strawberry and spice of Grenache so much that we bottle some varietally. The wine was aged forty months in 5 year-old French oak barriques. Long aging in neutral barrels intensifies the fruit but doesn't overpower the delicate Grenache flavors with oak.

We worked with the owners of Sugarloaf Vineyard to pick the perfect spot (hot!), best spacing, and ideal layout for these Grenache vines. While still a young site, the payoff is clear. We like this fruit as much as any we've used in the past, and the resulting wine is a winner. It has 20% Boushey Syrah to add mouthfeel, blue fruit layers, and richness. The hot location brings in all that peppery, red-fruit magic that we associate with great Grenache.

What a difference a year makes! 2008 was one of the coolest growing seasons and 2009 virtually the opposite. A cool, moist spring delayed bloom but by mid-June we were progressing at a typical pace. July and August were two of the hottest back-to-back months in recent history. The sugars accelerated, ahead of grape maturity. In September, despite high sugars, we had to wait for the proper flavors to develop. On October 10th an unprecedented early cold snap, "toasted" the vines' leaves and rendering them frozen in time. There was no choice but to harvest everything as fast as possible. The winery was packed to capacity with red fermenters and barrels of fermenting whites.

In retrospect, the vintage was a very good one for Washington State in spite of the record heat. The reds are being hailed for their great color depth and maturity. The white wines should be fairly opulent, as the skins developed a great deal of "bronzing" from the intense heat and extended exposure. This vintage is an expression of the very ripest fruit!

A pioneer of Rhône varieties 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: 3000 cases.

Washington State's Premier Rhône Varietal Winery

www.McCreaCellars.com * 1.800.378.6212