



2009 Mourvèdre Yakima Valley

Composition:	78% Mourvèdre 22% Syrah
Vineyards:	Ciel du Cheval, Red Mountain Elephant Mountain, Yakima Boushey, Yakima Valley
Harvest:	9/23 & 10/12/2009
Alcohol:	14.9%
pH:	3.8
Titrateable Acid:	5.4 grams/litre
Bottling:	December 27, 2012 — 201 cases

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Mourvèdre is gaining great respect and desirability in Washington State. The Mourvèdre comes from Beaucastel stock via Tablas Creek nurseries, planted at Ciel du Cheval on Red Mountain. In the beginning our purpose in planting Mourvèdre was for our southern-Rhône style blend ("Sirocco"), but we couldn't resist producing a small quantity as a single varietal. It has proved to be a very good 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 10% new. While adaptable to a wide variety of dishes, this wine loves venison, wild boar, osso buco, or smoked meats.

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 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: 2800 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Roussanne, Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Picpoul, Cinsault and Counoise.

90 points, Wine Enthusiast

Washington State's Premier Rhône Varietal Winery
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