



## 2009 Syrah

Yakima Valley

Composition:	100% Syrah
Vineyards:	Elephant Mountain Vyd. Sugarloaf Vineyard Boushey Grande Côte Vineyard
Harvest:	9/11, 9/23, & 10/15/2009
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	3.8
Titrateable Acid:	5.6 gm/litre
Bottling:	February 8, 2013; 380 cases

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Our 2009 Yakima Valley Syrah is a blend of grapes from three outstanding Yakima Valley vineyards. After de-stemming and gentle crushing (just enough to pop the berries) it was fermented in small batches of ¾ to 1-¾ 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 thirty-two months in 2- to 6-year old French oak.

Since we began the Syrah trend in Washington it has exploded in popularity – from about ten acres in 1997 to nearly 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 mocha. Our goal is to achieve a balance between New World intensity and Old World elegance. It will cellar well – ten years or more.

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 other physiological aspects (such as pH and T.A.) needed for balanced grape maturity. In September, despite high sugars, we had to wait for the proper flavors to develop. By October 10th we had only harvested half the total crop, but that Saturday night brought an unprecedented early cold snap, “toasting” the vines’ leaves and rendering them, in a sense, “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 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.

**89 points, Wine Enthusiast**

Washington State's Premier Rhône Varietal Winery

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