

## 2008 Cuvée Elena 250 cases

### Tasting Notes

Our Southern Rhone inspired blend was selected from our most balanced and elegant barrels from the '08 vintage. Cuvée Elena delivers red berry fruits, fig and delicate perfume, complemented by hints of raspberry drops, spice and garrigue with graceful length. This wine is mouth filling and intensely satisfying with with a fine, silky finish. The bright raspberry of Grenache is complemented by the classic notes of sweet spice, and sauvage from the Mourvedre, all tied together with the rich garrigue aromas of Syrah, Counoise and Cinsault.



### Harvest Notes

Vineyards: Northridge / Coyote Canyon / McKinley Springs  
Appellation: Columbia Valley (Wahluke & Horse Heaven Hills)  
Harvest Dates: Late September Through Late October  
Varietals: 48% Grenache / 24% Mourvedre / 13% Syrah / 10% Counoise / 5% Cinsault

### Vineyards

Northridge is managed by Milbrandt Vineyards and lies on the north edge of the Wahluke Slope AVA. Soils are extremely rocky, with southern exposure. Vines are trained VSP with a moderate density. Grenache from this site delivers classic plum and darker fruits while retaining acids.

Coyote Canyon Vineyard lies in the northern part of the Horse Heaven Hills and straddles the Missoula Flood high-water mark. The Mourvedre is planted to a steep south facing slope in rocky soils at 1,200' in elevation. The high calcium content of the soils translates into wines with great fruit expression while retaining bright acidity. The vines are trained VSP up and down the slope face.

At McKinley Springs Vineyard, Syrah typically ripens in the first weeks of September and gives us some of the most concentrated grapes we work with. Carignan, Cinsault and Grenache are all late ripening and usually the last grapes we pick each harvest. Planted at 1,100' in elevation on Warden sandy silt loam soils with north south row orientation. The canopy is trained VSP with the west side left to "flop" to protect the grapes from the hot afternoon sun. Shoot thinning and green thinning occur to ensure an even concentrated crop. Perhaps it is the elevation, or the soils, but this vineyard gives us some of the best balanced fruit we work with.

### Vinification

The fruit was hand harvested and transported to the winery in the early morning. All fruit was de-stemmed with no crushing. Wines were cold soaked followed by inoculated fermentation. Pressing occurred between 7 and 12 days past inoculation and wine was barreled in a blend of two and three year old French oak 225 L and 700 L barrels. Light egg white fining followed by a polish filtration preceded bottling. Barrel time of 16 months.