

2008 Columbia Valley Syrah 375 cases

Tasting Notes

Blended to showcase classic Washington Syrah, this wine draws from Horse Heaven Hills and Wahluke Slope vineyards. Brilliant deep ruby color with purple/red interior. Complex aromatics of blackberries and roasted cacao bean accentuate this concentrated Syrah. In the mouth this wine leads off with dark bramble fruits, and meaty aromas. Followed by olive stones, spice, and violets. Substantial weight is brightened by a backbone of acidity and ripe tannins. The tiny hint of Mourvedre blended adds a bit of brightening plum flavors. An intriguing combination of finesse and power that is sure to improve over time.



Harvest Notes

Vineyards: Coyote Canyon and Destiny Ridge, HHH, Milbrandt: Wahluke Slope
Appellation: Columbia Valley (60% Horse Heaven Hills, 40% Wahluke Slope)
Harvest Dates: Mid to late October
Varietals: 98% Syrah / 2% Mourvedre

Vineyard

Coyote Canyon Vineyard lies in the northern part of the Horse Heaven Hills and straddles the Misoula Flood high-water mark. The Syrah is planted to a steep south facing slope in rocky soils at 1200' 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.

Milbrandt's Clifton Vineyard is planted with cuttings from Boushey Vineyard at a moderate density and trained to VSP. Clifton is at a low elevation of 550' with a southwest exposure and backed by black basalt cliffs. Soils are sandy loam overlaying cobbles and basalt. This vineyard contributes warm climate flavors of jammy blackberry and meaty characteristics.

Located on the edge of a canyon draining into the Columbia River with a north tending slope, Destiny Ridge gives us our most mineral, highest acidity Syrah. Soils are windblown granite loess with the consistency of baking flour, well drained is an understatement. Here the vines bud out early (mid march) and ripen late, resulting in great intensity and elevated acidity. Vines are trained VSP with the southern side of each row left to 'flop' for sun protection. Yields struggle to achieve 2.5 tons per acre.

Vinification

The fruit is hand harvested and transported to the winery in the early morning. All fruit is destemmed with no crushing. All wines are cold soaked followed by inoculated fermentation. Pressing occurs just before dryness and is barreled in a blend of French oak, about 10% new. Occasional egg white fining followed by a polish filtration precedes bottling. Barrel time of 11 months.