

2009 Syrah, Ciel du Cheval 70 cases

Tasting Notes

Grace and complexity prevail over this intriguing wine. Rich, mouthwatering flavors of blueberry and spice are complemented by remarkable mid-palate and length. Purity of fruit shines through with aromas of fresh picked berries, black olives and classic Syrah nuances of smoke. This wine will age graciously for many years.

Harvest Notes

Vineyard: Ciel du Cheval
Appellation: Red Mountain
Varietals: 100% Syrah, Tablas Creek clone

Vineyards

The forces that helped form Ciel du Cheval, and the Red Mountain geology in general, were truly gigantic. The deep bedrock of most of the Columbia Basin is basalt, formed from the massive lava outflows caused by intense volcanic activity. On top of the basalt lie layers of sediment deposited by repeated ancient floods—the largest floods ever recorded. On top of the sediment are layers of sand and silt from eons of erosion and weathering. The high alkalinity and high calcium carbonate content produce wines of incredible structure and longevity.

Jim Holmes, a pioneering grower on Red Mountain, planted Ciel du Cheval vineyard in the late 1970's. His vineyard is known for producing the most elegant wines from Red Mountain. Ryan Johnson, the vineyard manager, is one of the most intuitive, insightful and humble people we have met in the wine industry. His attention to detail and willingness to work with wineries makes Ciel a pure joy to work with. The fruit we work with at Ciel is all Fan Trained.

Vinification

The fruit was hand harvested and transported to the winery in the early morning. All fruit was de-stemmed with no crushing. It was then cold soaked for two days followed by inoculated fermentation in small open top fermenters with manual pigeage. Pressing occurred just before dryness and all wine was barreled in a blend of 3–4 yr old French oak. This bottling contains 100% free run juice. Egg white fining was with our own home-grown organic eggs. A polish filtration preceded bottling. Barrel time of 16 months.

