



## Wine Tech Notes

### 2014 Cuvée Elena

350 cases produced • 14.6% Alc by Vol.

#### Tasting Notes

Our southern Rhone inspired blend was selected from our most balanced and elegant barrels from the 2014 vintage. Rich and savory, the fresh fig and plum aromas and flavors are complemented by hints of kirsch and black pepper, with an elegant texture and graceful, velvety finish.



#### Harvest Notes

- Vineyards:** 25% Ciel du Cheval, 25% McKinley Springs, 20% Heart of the Hill, 20% Coyote Canyon, 10% Chukar Ridge
- Appellation:** Columbia Valley (45% Red Mt, 45% Horse Heaven Hills, 10% Columbia Valley)
- Vineyards:** 60% Mourvedre / 30% Grenache / 10% Syrah

#### Vineyards

The forces that helped form **Ciel du Cheval**, **Heart of the Hill** 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. Mourvedre from Ciel and Heart of the Hill are used in this year’s Cuvee Elena.

**McKinley Springs** is planted at 1,100 feet in elevation on Warden sandy silt loam soils with north south row orientation. Canopy is trained modified sprawl 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 crop. Perhaps it is the elevation, or the soils, but this vineyard gives us some of the best balanced fruit we work with. Grenache from McKinley is in the Cuvee Elena blend

**Coyote Canyon Mourvedre** was planted on what was the shoreline of the great Missoula Floods. This steep and stony hillside is layered with gravel and caliche and has unencumbered southern exposure.

**Chukar Ridge Syrah** is grown in the Columbia Hills, NE of Dallesport just over the eastern border of the Columbia Gorge AVA. 1,000 ft in elevation along the Columbia River, with sandy loam overlaying silty clay loam, extreme Gorge wind results in very small, loose clusters, low PH, high acid levels and especially dark color with intense flavors and lower brix.

#### Vinification

Mourvedre was destemmed and fermented in 33HL Concrete cubes with twice daily pump-overs and early delestage in 2-7 year old French oak Puncheons (500L).

Grenache was de-stemmed, and fermented in one ton open top fermenters with manual pigeage, then aged in neutral barrels 225 L to 500L in size.

Syrah was destemmed and fermented in small open top fermenters with manual pigeage, then aged in small, older French oak. Unfined, with 16 months in barrel. This bottling contains 100% free run juice.