

L'Ecole No 41

2003 Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Appellation

Released: December 2005

Variety: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Vineyard: This wine is a blend of several premium vineyards including: Bacchus & Dionysus, Klipsun, Willard Farms, Portteus, Candy Mountain, Pepper Bridge, Seven Hills, and Milbrandt Vineyards. Most of these vines were planted in the 1970's and early 1980's resulting in an average vine age of over 25 years.

Harvest: 2003 will be recorded as the warmest vintage on record in the last 20 years and, for quality, this was good news! A mild, cool spring helped the vines recover from some slight winter injury in October of 2002. July and August were extremely warm, keeping berry size and cluster weights down, which produced lower yields. These conditions resulted in vibrantly fruity whites, and deep, rich extraction in the reds. A one-day rain in early September brought with it cooler weather, extending harvest and hang-time for improved fruit flavors and intensity.

Technical: This Cabernet Sauvignon was harvested beginning in mid-September for our warmer sites, and extending into mid-October for the cooler vineyards, averaging 24.4% Brix, 3.35 pH and 0.55 grams/100 ml acidity.

Bottled 4,397 cases July 12-13, 2005; pH 3.65, acid 0.67 g/100ml, 13.9% alcohol by volume, <0.2% residual sugar

Description: *With a classic varietal Cabernet profile, this firmly structured and integrated wine shows dark blackberry and sweet blueberry aromas with flavors of ripe plum, bittersweet chocolate, black cherry and currants on an earthy toasty concentrated finish.*

Vinification: Each lot was harvested ripe and gently crushed into one-ton stainless steel fermenters. The must was inoculated with yeast and punched down by hand during fermentation to maximize fruit extraction. When fermentation was complete or we were otherwise satisfied with the level of tannin and flavor extract, the must was gently pressed. After settling, the wine was racked to 100% small oak barrels with approximately 40% new oak, and was barrel-aged 22 months with five rackings. The final blend was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered to preserve its natural flavors.