

# L'Ecole No 41

## 2003 Columbia Valley Syrah Columbia Valley Appellation

**Released:** August 2005

**Variety:** 98% Syrah, 2% Carmenère

**Vineyard:** This Syrah is a blend of five premier vineyards including: 33% Milbrandt Vineyard; 32% Willard Family Farms; 16% Bacchus B5; 7% Candy Mountain; and 7% from our Estate Seven Hills Vineyard.

**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 hangtime for improved fruit flavors and intensity.

**Technical:** The Syrah from Candy Mountain and Seven Hills Vineyard was harvested in early September. Harvest stretched into mid-October for the remaining three vineyard sites. Average composition was 25.3% Brix, 3.74 pH and 0.46 grams/100ml acidity.

Bottled 2,016 cases February 28, 2005; 3.75 pH, acid 0.61 g/100ml, 14.8% alcohol by volume, <0.2% residual sugar

**Description:** *This Columbia Valley Syrah shows opulent blackberry and plum fruit with blueberry and brambly flavors of raspberry and blackberry, with spice and pepper notes on a richly structured finish.*

**Vinification:** Each lot was hand 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 gravity fed into the press. After a gentle pressing, the wine was racked to tank and allowed to settle. The wine was then racked to 100% small oak barrels, with approximately 30% new oak, and was barrel aged 18 months with four rackings. The final blend was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered to preserve its natural flavors.