

L'Ecole No 41

2006 Columbia Valley Syrah Columbia Valley Appellation

Released: November 2008

Variety: 95% Syrah, 5% Grenache

Vineyard: This Syrah is a blend from several premium vineyards including: Clifton; Estate Seven Hills Vineyard; Stone Tree; Bacchus; Candy Mountain; Pheasant; Mirage and Willard Farms.

Harvest: A cool spring, followed by a cool fruit set in June set the stage for lower yields than normal in 2006. Light crops tend to get lighter, and an abundance of sunshine and heat units in July resulted in small berry size and cluster weights. A mild August helped extend the late season ripening period into September and October. The overall season crop load was lower than normal, at 2 ½ tons per acre. Our traditional cool long harvest with no rainfall resulted in fabulous fruit quality, with bright clean aromatics and acidity in the whites and vibrant extraction and rich color in the red wines.

Technical: Harvest commenced in mid-September at our warmer vineyard sites and continued into mid-October. Average composition was 25.7% Brix, 3.60 pH and 0.55 grams/100ml acidity.

Bottled 2,683 cases February 26, 2008; 3.79 pH, acid 0.58 g/100ml, 14.8% alcohol by volume, <0.2% residual sugar

Description: *This wine shows aromas of ripe blackberry, alluring spice and earth. Wrapped in a core of briar fruit, this rich and expressive Syrah follows through to a balanced finish of fine, chalky tannins.*

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 25% new oak, and was barrel aged 18 months with four rackings.