L'Ecole

№ 41

TOP AWARDS AND REVIEWS

2023 Apogee, Pepper Bridge Vineyard
Walla Walla Valley

97 PTS

James Suckling, Courtney Humiston - April 2026

Earthy and dark-fruited, with layers of intensity, depth and structure. Full-bodied but not heavy, with wonderful lift and powdery tannins. A Cabernet-based Bordeaux blend with Merlot, Malbec and a little Cabernet Franc. Drink or hold.

96 PTS

AnthonyMueller.com, Anthony Mueller - September 2026

An elegant red blend, the 2023 Apogee is quite Bordeaux-esque with a firm, gripping tension. Very mineral-driven and quite a step in the world, it features rustic grip and an earthy, rocky, tobacco, and dusty core. It has a long, lingering finish. Be patient. Drink 2030-2045.

96 PTS

OwenBargreen.com, Owen Bargreen - July 2026

The wow-factor 2023 'Apogee' comes from the acclaimed Pepper Bridge Vineyard, which is one of the oldest vineyards in Walla Walla. This edition is nearly identical to the '22, made of mainly Cabernet Sauvignon (65%), with 25% Merlot and smaller parts Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Like any release of the 'Apogee,' its nervy edge really requires an hour in the decanter before enjoying. It is an elegant and bright wine with a fabulous acid backbone. Despite the heat of the vintage, the tension offered here is really impressive. This is loaded with stony and salty minerals on the palate, with a lush core of red and dark fruits that parade with chocolate pie, dark currants, and pipe tobacco. Seriously good, this beauty has each varietal singing in clockwork unison. While gorgeous in its youth, this will easily go for another fifteen years. Drink 2026–2044.

93 PTS, CELLAR STOCKER

Northwest Wine Report, Sean P. Sullivan - August 2026

This wine is mostly Cabernet Sauvignon (60%), with the balance Merlot (25%), Malbec (11%), and Cabernet Franc. It was aged 22 months in French oak (40% new). The aromas are fragrant, with notes of cocoa, black raspberry, plum, flower, and sweet spice. Svelte, focused flavors follow, very pleasing, measured, and balanced. It's all about subtlety. Best from 2030 to 2040.

92 PTS

Jeb Dunnuck, Virginie Boone - April 2026

One of the producer's cooler-sourced sites, the 2023 Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard is often picked seven to 10 days later than Seven Hills, if not more. Black fruit-dominant, it has sizable amounts of Merlot (25%) and Malbec (11%), as well as a dusting of Cabernet Franc, and is plush, moderately herbaceous, and full-bodied, structured for further aging. Enjoy 2030-2040.