

# El Conquistador

2014 | Columbia Valley



70% Tempranillo  
26% Mourvedre  
4% Syrah

70% LES COLLINES TEMPRANILLO VINEYARD  
26% WALLULA MOURVEDRE VINEYARD  
4% OLSEN RANCH SYRAH VINEYARD

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

pH: 3.99

TA: 5.775 g/liter

RS: <0.5 g/liter

13.9% alc. by vol.

262 cases produced



## Harvest and Winemaking

2014 was a the warmest vintage on record for Washington. It was a very hot summer and the warmth continued through the end of October until a freak cold snap hit Washington in early November.

Luckily for Isenhower Cellars, Gramercy Cellars let go a wonderful block of Tempranillo at Les Collines Vineyard, located in the foothills of the Blue Mountains in Walla Walla. Les Collines is a cooler vineyard which is perfect for an early ripening variety like Tempranillo. It is truly a special site for Tempranillo!

We picked the Les Collines Tempranillo on October 3, the Wallula Mourvèdre was picked on October 9, and the Olsen Ranch Syrah was picked on October 23. All the grapes were hand harvested and sorted and fermented by yeasts native to the vineyard. Only the free run wine was retained to enhance the elegance of the wine.

The Tempranillo was aged in one new French Oak barrel and 7 used French Oak barrels. The Mourvedre and Syrah also were aged in used French Oak prior to blending. The wines were aged sur lie for 18 months prior to bottling on February 26, 2016.

## Tasting

The El Conquistador has a dark red hue with aromas of dried sweet cherries, leather, brown spices, and tangerine peel. The wine is broad and expressive. The richness of red fruit from the Mourvèdre in the mid pallet plays nicely with the ripe and plentiful tannins of the Tempranillo. The El Conquistador is a masculine and intense wine. There is enough acidity to carry the wine well for excellent aging potential through at least 2024.

## Thoughts on Tempranillo and Blending

Tempranillo is the great grape of Spain and frequently is blended with Monastrell (Mourvèdre), Granache (Grenache), Carignan, and Graciano. We add a healthy dose of Mourvèdre to enhance the midpallet mouthfeel and a hint of Syrah to add some deeper color. Hey, it's a Washington blend, don't we have to add a dose of Syrah?

El Conquistador is our chance to experiment with grape varieties that are not commonly blended together but still create a wine that is enjoyable.

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