

River Beauty

2014 | YAKIMA VALLEY



60% Dutchman Vineyard Syrah
40% Olsen Ranch clone 877 Syrah

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

pH: 3.95

TA: 5.475 g/liter

RS: <0.5 g/liter

14.6% alc.

251 cases produced



Harvest and Winemaking

2014 was an incredibly warm vintage. The summer was HOT and the warmth continued through the end of October. A freak cold snap hit Washington in early November causing significant bud damage in lower elevations in the Walla Walla Valley.

We picked 6.7 tons of Dutchman Vineyard Syrah on October 13 and 2.7 tons of Olsen Ranch Vineyard Syrah on October 23. Dutchman Vineyard was planted in 1991 as is the 2nd oldest block of Syrah in Washington. Olsen Ranch Syrah is clone 877 and was planted in 2009. Clone 877 is a highly sought by winemakers because of its reputation for producing outstanding Syrah in France.

All the grapes were hand harvested and hand sorted to remove less than perfect clusters and material other than grapes. 80% of the clusters were destemmed and we dumped in 20% whole clusters into the fermentation bins. Partial whole cluster fermentation makes the resulting Syrah more elegant and balanced.

Both lots of Syrah were cold soaked for 4 days prior to the native yeasts started the fermentation. The fermentation cap was punched down three times daily until pressing. Only the free run wine was retained for the River Beauty. The Syrah's were aged in 100% Burgundy French Oak barrels (30% new) on the fine lees for 20 months prior to bottling.

Tasting

The River Beauty has an inky red-black hue and aromas of white pepper, cranberry, blueberry, earth and gravel. Supple and light texture but with focus and intensity. The Syrah has a light floral flavors intermingled with blackberries, and cranberries. The tannins are soft however the acidity carries the Syrah long into the finish. The whole cluster fermentation softens and focuses the texture of the Syrah while adding length.

About Syrah

There are many legends about the source of Syrah. It is evident from DNA analysis that Syrah has been grown in the Rhone Valley since at least the 13th century. In the 19th century, immigrants to Australia carried Syrah cuttings with them creating the famous Shiraz wines.

Red Willow Vineyard had the first Syrah vines planted in 1986. Dutchman Vineyard is planted with cuttings taken from those vines. In the early 2000's plantings of Syrah in Washington exploded, making it the third most widely planted red varietal in the state.

Syrah's versatility and wide flavor profile make a very fun wine to craft. For the consumer Syrah can be fun exploration of all the permutations & nuances of the wine.

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