

2009 **SIX**

ESTATE GROWN ~ COLUMBIA VALLEY



- **COMPOSITION:** 100% Cabernet Sauvignon - all grapes estate grown
- **AGING:** 16 months in French & American oak barrels
- **pH:** 3.55
- **TA:** 7.3 g /L
- **ALCOHOL:** 13.8%
- **PRODUCTION:** 412 cases

VINTAGE

Cabernet Sauvignon is, by its very nature, a late variety-- in a normal growing season Cabernet will break bud and ripen later than almost any other grape variety we grow on the Gordon Estate. Thus in 2009, as cool winter weather persisted well into May, we had serious concerns about our Cabernet ripening by harvest time. Fortunately the cool spring quickly transitioned into a hot summer with record-breaking heat in July and August. As the calendar turned to September, the grapes began the longed-for change from hard green marbles to dark purple and plump juiciness. The thermometer showed low 80's in the afternoons, optimal for allowing the fruit to fully ripen without overly stressing the vines. Harvest of our 2009 Six took place on the 7th & 8th of October.

WINEMAKING

The 2009 vintage delivered just over 14 tons of petite and intensely colored clone 6 Cabernet Sauvignon berries. The grapes were gently crushed and transferred to two of our open top fermenters for 24 hour maceration prior to yeast inoculation. Each tank was inoculated with different yeast, with the goal of creating a round supple wine with elegant tannin structure. During fermentation we used our full arsenal of cap management techniques: pump over, drain and return, punch down. Each technique has its advantages and by combining all three we are able to maximize our extraction of tannins and color. The wine was then pressed off and allowed to settle in tank for 24 hours prior to racking and transferring the wine to barrels for malo-lactic fermentation and subsequent aging. For the blending of the final cuvee prior to bottling, each set of barrels was tasted blind to evaluate the effect of oak on the finished wine. From this evaluation the final barrels were selected and blended together along with small amounts of clone 8 Cabernet from one of our oldest vineyard blocks. The addition of Cabernet from one of our heritage blocks gives the wine extra layers of depth and complexity. The wine was aged an additional 3 months prior to bottling on June 1st 2011.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

Intensely colored with dark plum the unique nature of SIX is immediately apparent. Aromas of cassis, chocolate-covered raspberries and vanilla bean carried on an ocean breeze greet the senses. Flavors of cherry, pomegranate, cedar and spice intermingle leading to a lengthy finish of black cherry and rhubarb. This wine yearns for a juicy steak.

