



GORDON

Estate



2012 *Syrah*

ESTATE GROWN ~ COLUMBIA VALLEY

- **COMPOSITION:** 90% Syrah, 6% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon
- **pH:** 3.57
- **TA:** 6.6 g/L
- **ALCOHOL:** 13.9%
- **PRODUCTION:** 2,000 cases

VINTAGE

Our 2012 vintage endured a roller coaster of changing weather. With no hint of the pandemonium to come, spring began on time with normal temperatures. This quickly gave way to unusual temperature fluctuations, with a brief heat wave in April, followed by a downward temperature spike and unsettled weather. Once again in May the heat returned, only to again quickly give way to cold and rain. As summer began, our June was cold and damp while July brought humidity and thunderstorms. Lightning-caused fires created an enduring smoky haze which blew continually across the Columbia valley. In August the sticky heat turned to dry and we reached triple-figures for a few days. September brought only slight relief to the heat, which meant the fruit was ready for picking just as the transition to fall took place. Finding an intensity to the fruit brought on by the heat, we harvested our 2012 Estate Syrah from the 28th of September through the 10th of October.

WINEMAKING

For our Gordon Estate 2012 Syrah we utilized successful techniques from vintages past for the development of structure and complexity: diversified yeast strains, drain and return method of cap management and whole cluster fermentation. A tried and true technique in Burgundy and the Rhone Valley, whole cluster fermentation utilizes the grapes directly from the field without de-stemming and crushing. With crushed fruit, the grape is gently broken open allowing the yeast immediate access the delicious nectar inside the berry. In whole cluster fruit the yeasts have to work their way inside of the grape, and fermentation proceeds for several days before the skin of the grape is broken down and the yeasts are released. In this way, each and every intact grape acts as a micro-fermenter bringing a unique fruit character to the wine. To our surprise, the stems from the whole clusters also brought about an unexpected benefit—typically, stems are considered a negative in wine fermentations and American wineries will go to great lengths to remove any and all pieces of stem. The key to successful whole cluster fermentation is that the stems are not in pieces, which can impart bitterness to the wine; instead the intact stems add structure and length to the palate. With all of the tools in place, the wines were fermented in our open top tanks with a 6 day minimum fermentation time. Wines were pressed and settled in tank before racking to small oak barrels for aging. We aged individual wines for 16 months prior to making the final cuvee with bottling taking place in March of 2014.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

Inspection of our 2012 Estate Syrah reveals an intense garnet color with hues of purple peeking out. Subtle aromas of fragrant wood smoke and touches of forest floor leave the impression that this wine has a depth that is waiting to be discovered. For all the aromas of dark fruit the impression on the palate is plush and velvety with bright flavors of red fruit, fresh sprigs of thyme and oregano, freshly peeled orange and a touch of violets. The finish is long and lingering with a gentleness of fruit that keeps coming through. Enjoy!