

Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah both grow exceptionally well in the Walla Walla Valley and blending the two gives us the opportunity to combine the savory and blue fruit characteristics of Syrah with the dark, red fruit-driven freshness and structure of Cabernet Sauvignon. Less common in the US, this new-world blend is popular in Australia other wine regions. It's been rumored, however, that Syrah found it's way into Cabernet-based blends from notable old-world regions for many years. In our opinion, both varieties can easily be overdone so, to craft a wine of balance and freshness, we exercise restraint both in harvest timing and use of new oak.

## Vineyard

When we took over farming a previously established vineyard in the Mill Creek area of the Walla Walla Valley in 2020, we immediately saw an opportunity to revisit a blend we had tried a few years earlier but had stopped making because we didn't have the right vineyard blocks at the time. That situation changed in 2020 when we started farming Wheat Ridge vineyard. Originally planted by Steve Ahler, the vineyard has changed names and owners several times, but the original plantings of Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah remain - and are the only varieties planted at that site.

Wheat Ridge Vineyard sits at 1,315 to 1,350 feet above sea level on deep wind-blown loess soils. The small 10-acre (4 hectares) site was planted in 1998 to 7 acres Clone 8 Cabernet Sauvignon and just 1.5 acres of Syrah. The Cabernet block features an ideal south sloping orientation that allows full ripening but, because of the elevation, the site experiences more moderated temperatures, generally avoiding the region's highest and lowest extremes throughout the year. The Syrah was planted to the Joseph Phelps clone and sits at the highest part of the property along the north edge. With more tree shade and irrigated landscaping along the block, it's a relatively cool site for the valley.

## Winemaking

- Blend: 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Syrah
- Vinification: 100% hand picked, cluster sorted, and destemmed -whole berry with no crushing; fermented in open-top stainless tank with gentle pump overs twice daily.
- Aged: 20 months in 38% new French Oak, 62% neutral oak barriques (225L)
- Racked once prior to final blending
- Bottled unfined and unfiltered on June 7th, 2022

## Tasting Notes

Medium to dark ruby in the glass, the nose has savory notes of calamata olive combined with cedar cigar box and dark fruit with hints of tea. Given the blend, the wine is aromatically generous and generally ripe - characteristics you might expect from two powerful varieties. However, the unique terroir of Wheat Ridge vineyard allows us to maintain freshness and red fruits on a medium body with cellar-worthy structure and a distinct sense of elegance. Decant now or enjoy from 2024 to 2030.

## Technical Details

- 250 cases produced
- 14.2% ABV
- 3.83 pH
- 5.7 g/L TA
- Harvested Sep 25 through Oct 9

