

2009
PROTAGONIST
COLUMBIA VALLEY



TASTING NOTES

The fourth release of this highly sought after blend is a doozy. A blend of cool and warm site vineyards, the wine shows incredible depth and complexity without being overbearing. The darker characteristics of this wine lean toward chocolate, mocha and cola, complemented by a mixed bowl of fruit ranging from black berries and plums to dates and figs. The wine's sweet viscosity leads to a long finish that coats the palate with a delicious loveliness.

**RICHLAND & WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON
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VINTAGE The 2009 vintage was one of the warmest on record in Washington. The cool, dry spring only slightly delayed bud break and the warm summer months began in June and did not let up until late September. The summer was as consistent heat-wise as any previous recorded vintage but lacked the extreme temperature spikes experienced in the past. The warm vintage thankfully led to early ripening as 2009 will become known as the tale of two vintages—pre frost and post frost. For the first time on record, Eastern Washington was consumed by a deep frost beginning October 9 and continuing for three nights. Fruit not fully mature by the time of the frost did not have a chance to fully ripen. The ripe fruit harvested pre-frost was outstanding, whereas the fruit that still needed hang time at the time of the frost was a little less than optimal from a maturity standpoint.

WINEMAKING All the grapes were hand-harvested at optimal maturity and hand-sorted over a conveyor belt before de-stemming, then post-sorted over a shaker table to remove poor quality grapes and jack stems. The grapes were only de-stemmed and gently moved to our red wine fermentors with a high percentage of whole berries. All the wine lots were cold soaked in open-top fermentors for four to five days prior to fermentation. Once inoculated with Bordeaux Red yeast, the wine was allowed to ferment at temperatures between 80 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Two to three daily punch downs coupled with aerative pumpovers precipitated gentle extraction. After approximately five to seven days of fermentation, the wines were gently pressed between 2 and 5 Brix. All the free run and press wines were separated and aged independently from one another. Primary and malolactic fermentations were completed in new and used French oak barrels. During the aging process, the wines were topped once a week and racked and gently fined only if necessary.

APPELLATIONS • VINEYARDS

Columbia Valley 75%	Conner-Lee 64%
	Dionysus 11%
Red Mountain 25%	Ciel du Cheval 25%

FINAL BLEND

75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc.

AGING

Aged for 20 months in new and one & two-year-old French oak barrels. Most if not all of the barrels were three year air dried, thin stave, medium toast with toasted heads.

CASES PRODUCED

930 six-pack cases/750mL

TECHNICAL DATA

Bottled Summer 2011,
pH 3.77, TA .57,
Alcohol 15.6% by volume

