

Rara Avis

2014 | COLUMBIA VALLEY



68% Grenache Olsen Ranch Vineyard
26% Mourvèdre Wallula Vineyard
6% Syrah Dutchman Vineyard

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

pH: 3.83

TA: 4.95 g/liter

RS: 0.2 g/liter

15% Alcohol

236 cases produced



Harvest and Winemaking

2014 was a remarkable vintage. It was the second warmest vintage in Washington State history, very prolific in tons of grapes per acre harvested, and one of the highest quality vintages ever.

The Grenache is clone 3, planted at Olsen Ranch Vineyard near Benton City, Washington. Wallula Vineyard Mourvèdre is planted on steep outcropping above the Columbia River in rural Benton County. Dutchman Vineyard was planted in 1991 near Grandview, Washington. It is the second oldest Syrah vineyard in the state.

All the grapes were hand harvested: Grenache - Oct. 3, Mourvèdre - Oct. 9, and Syrah - Oct. 13. The grapes were hand sorted and destemmed, and fermented by yeasts native to their respective vineyards. All the fermentations were punched down three times a day until pressing. Only the free wine was retained to create the Rara Avis.

The Grenache was aged in new French oak puncheons (500 liters) and the Mourvèdre and Syrah was aged in used French Oak barrels (225 liters). All the wines were barrel stirred three time, and aged sur lie prior to bottling.

Tasting

The Rara Avis has a dark red hue and aromas of Bing cherries, ultra-ripe strawberries, white pepper, damp earth, anise, and crushed granite. A first taste of the reveals an open and plush entry into the mouth with enjoyable red fruits. The mid pallet is relatively tight with the damp soil and crushed rock coming through. The Rara Avis finishes with soft tannins and just a hint of dark chocolate. Enjoy through 2020.

Thoughts on Grenache

Grenache is relatively rare in Washington; therefore the name "Rara Avis" (rare bird in latin). The Grenache vine is relatively cold sensitive so it has to be planted in higher elevation areas to avoid cold, stagnate air in the winter.

Grenache wine tends to be lighter in body and color and has lower acidity. We blend in a healthy dose of Mourvèdre to the Rara Avis to add acidity, density, and weight. Mourvèdre also adds a rustic note. We debate every year whether or not to blend Syrah into the Grenache. A few percentage points of Syrah deepens the hue.

Grenache pairs very well with comfort foods, braised meats, and roasted vegetables.

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