

# HORSE HEAVEN HILLS

## 2011 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

### COLUMBIA · CREST

Vineyards in the Horse Heaven Hills are the source and inspiration behind the H3 wines. The hills have been home to Columbia Crest winery for more than two decades. Winemaker Juan Muñoz Oca combines innovative and traditional winemaking practices to highlight bold flavors in the wines that capture the unique *terroir* of the region.

#### Growing Season

- A combination of weather conditions led to one of the more challenging vintages in Washington state's history.
- A freeze in Nov. 2010 affected vineyards throughout the Columbia Valley, though many sites were not harmed. Additionally, the diversity of Columbia Crest's vineyard sources balanced vintage variances.
- Cool temperatures prevailed during the springtime which delayed bud break and bloom by three to four weeks. Consistently warm summer temperatures lengthened the ripening period. Many sites began harvest three weeks later than a typical year.
- October was warm and dry, allowing the grapes to hang a bit longer, creating depth without sugar accumulation.

#### Vineyards

- The Horse Heaven Hills vineyards are located east of the Cascade Mountain range. Up to 14,000 feet high, the mountains effectively block eastward-moving wet weather systems from the Pacific Ocean.
- The terrain consists of south-facing slopes that provide excellent sun exposure for grape ripening, and good air drainage which protects the vineyards during the winter months.
- Well-drained sandy soils have low fertility and low water-holding capacity, allowing precise control of vine growth patterns.
- Strong wind patterns, which are unique to the Horse Heaven Hills, reduce canopy size and density, create better sun exposure, and contribute to even ripening by moderating temperature extremes.

#### Vinification

- Grapes were crushed at 20% whole-berry to retain fruit quality.
- Fermentation lasted 6-10 days on the skins to extract optimal fruit and structural components.
- Various yeasts were used to maintain fruit flavors and complexity.
- Malolactic fermentation occurred in stainless steel tanks and oak barrels. Blending occurred shortly after malolactic fermentation.
- The wine was barrel aged in 40% new and 60% older French oak for 18 months.
- The wine was racked three times during the 18-month barrel aging period.

#### Tasting Notes

"This bold Cabernet opens with flavors of dark fruit and black cherries, complemented by earth and mineral notes. Deep berry flavors and supple tannins lead to a soft cocoa finish."

Juan Muñoz Oca, Winemaker

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Vineyards: Horse Heaven Hills  
Harvest Date: 10/29/2011  
Blend: 92% Cabernet Sauvignon  
6% Cabernet Franc  
2% Malbec  
Alcohol: 14.0%  
Total Acidity: 0.57g/100ml  
pH: 3.60

Food Pairings: Tomato-based sauces such as Bolognese and Puttanesca, intensely and richly flavored foods such as grilled meats, braised lamb shanks or pot roast, and strongly flavored cheeses.