

JEB DUNNUCK

Your Completely Independent Guide to Fine Wines

Wine Rating System

100-96	As good as It gets. These wines reach the peak of my personal scale of quality
95-90	Outstanding. These wines are outstanding for their type and are worth the extra effort to seek out.
89-87	Very Good to Good. These offer real character and can be age worthy. The majority of my cellar and what I drink on a daily basis falls into this category.
86-80	Good to Decent. While still good, these wines lack character or fail to show a significant number of positive traits.
79-50	Quaffable to Undrinkable. Wines rated less than 80 points are not recommended. They will range from passable to flawed and undrinkable.

I score wines on the above scale, and the bottle price, winery/wine reputation, and vintage have no bearing on the score. While a well-written note should not need a score, its inclusion allows a clear, easy to understand delineation of preferences. This allows a more concise note that can focus on the positive aspects of each wine as opposed to always having to explain why a wine rated 88 points isn't as good as one rated outstanding with 95 points. A precise score also forces the reviewer to make a hard decision – and I will agonize over small differences in score. Having said that, and while I believe a reviewer should be as precise as possible (i.e. the old saying "aim small, miss small"), readers should interpret broadly and take any rating system with a grain of salt. The only difference between a wine I rate 89 points and one I rate 90 points (or one rated 100 points and one rated 97 points for that matter) is that I liked one a little more than the other. That's all a score tells you and a score represents the reviewer's opinion.

While I use score ranges in the case of barrel samples, I will also use a range if I am unsure of a wine or if the tasting conditions do not allow enough time or focus on the wine. Wines are scored on their overall quality. The note should indicate my best guess at when the wine will be at maturity; however, drinking young, structured wines can provide just as much pleasure as drinking fully mature, completely integrated bottles. If you prefer the latter and don't like young, tannic wines or wines with primary fruit, don't open a newly released Châteauneuf-du-Pape and expect the

same level of enjoyment that I get from it. While scores give you a clear idea of what I think of the wine, please realize that there are times when a less complex, easier drinking wine is actually the best wine for a given situation. I cringe every time I hear someone state that their cellar consists of only 90+ point wines (I'll ignore the source of the point rating) because I truly believe that person is missing out on a huge swath of interesting wines that deliver immense pleasure. Soft and easy are not always bad things and there are times when it doesn't get better than taking big gulps of a fresh, newly released Côtes-du-Rhône with a roast chicken or quaffing a delicious Rosé after work or with dinner. The style of the wine (described by the note) is every bit as important as the score. To me, any wine rated 85 points or higher is a wine I like, believe can be enjoyed, and has noteworthy qualities. In the case of barrel tastings, I use a range for the score. While I think it is possible to evaluate barrel samples (especially final blends), these notes should always be taken with a grain of salt. Scoring is a subjective portion of wine evaluation and as such, is simply my personal preference for a wine at a given point in time. Nothing more, nothing less. Any score or note in isolation is close to worthless and it is only after reading multiple notes and tasting multiple bottles that a reader can start to understand where the note taker is coming from.

At the end of the day, the only opinion that matters is yours and my goal is to help you find a wine, either via a note or score (or both), that you will enjoy.

Latest Releases from Washington State

This report focuses on the 2015s from Washington State, which is another terrific vintage for the region. Washington has been on an undeniable roll since 2012, and these newly released 2015s, and upcoming 2016s, aren't going to break the trend.

The 2015 Vintage

The 2015 Vintage was early and hot, and it's one of the hottest growing seasons on record. To put it in perspective, the average Growing Degree Days (GDD) for the Columbia Valley is 2,628. In 2015, the Columbia Valley accumulated 3,157 GDDs, with Red Mountain (one of the hottest AVAs) seeing north of 3,900.

However, Washington can handle heat and vintages are characterized more by when/how the heat is accumulated over the growing season. In the case of 2015, the season got off to an incredibly early start before being consistently hot going into the summer. Multiple heat spikes in June and July caused vines to shut down, and growers had to battle the balance between sugars and phenolic ripeness going into harvest. A cooler, more normal end to the season allowed the phenolics to catch up, but harvest and vinification decisions were critical in getting ripe tannins in the wines.

The wines have beautiful purity of fruit yet are slightly firmer and more classically styled compared to the more broad and voluptuous 2012s and 2014s. I think the phenolics lag what was achieved in 2014 (and 2012) and the wines have slightly less density and mid-palate depth, with an equal amount of tannin. Nevertheless, the top wines shine for their purity of fruit, balance, and length.

I gave the nod to the Rhône varieties last year when I tasted these wines from barrel, but from bottle, the Bordeaux blends showed beautifully as well. It's a strong vintage for both Rhône and Bordeaux varieties. I compared the vintage to a hypothetical mix of 2013 and 2014 last year, and that comparison holds today.

In short, **2015 is another terrific vintage for Washington State** that has yielded ripe, yet also pure and focused wines that will benefit from short-term cellaring.

The 2014 Vintage

Before 2015, 2014 was the latest "hottest vintage to date" and came in even above what the region saw in 2013, which was another record breaker. However, where 2013 and 2015 saw more heat spikes, the heat in 2014 was even and consistent, and growers and winemakers were able to handle the heat beautifully.

The vintage kicked off with an extremely dry winter and spring with flowering occurring under ideal conditions resulting in an even, large crop (which helped with the heat during the summer). Summer was consistently hot and even, with no notable weather events, and harvest was rushed and short, with most grape varieties ripening at the same time.

Looking at the wines, these are ripe, plush, sexy wines that still hold onto a terrific sense of purity and freshness. While they're not as concentrated or opulent as the 2012s, they have what should be treasured by the true wine lovers (and drinkers) – upfront charm, beautiful drinkability, and impeccable balance.

In short, 2014 is another terrific vintage for Washington and only slightly behind 2012, 2010, and 2007, yet a step up over 2015, 2013, and 2011.

The 2013 Vintage

Like 2015, as well as 2005 and 2003, the 2013 vintage was a scorcher that broke heat records (at the time). The season started off roughly a week ahead of average with a large, even crop load. This was followed by scorching temperatures in July through September, with harvest wrapping up for most by late September and early October. Berry sizes were tiny, the grape skins were thick, and these are concentrated, focused, classic wines that remind me of the 2015s. The majority of these have shed their baby fat and a touch of their tannin, and are drinking nicely today, but should be long-lived.

The 2012 Vintage

The greatest vintage in the past decade (it's on par with 2007 and 2002), 2012 was a sensational vintage for Washington State that featured a long, even, consistent growing season followed by an Indian Summer allowing harvest to stretch into late October. I commented on release that a number of estates had made their best wines to date, and that still holds true today. The wines are still youthful, yet their beautiful purity and depth of fruit have them drinking well. The 2007s and 2002s are still going strong today for the top wines and I expect the same evolution for the 2012s.

The 2011 Vintage

Breaking the trend, the 2011 Vintage was the coolest vintage since 1993. With bud break 2-3 weeks behind average and a cool, moderate summer, growers left the grapes on the vine as long as possible (this was helped by a beautiful Indian Summer), but there were plenty of unripe grapes left on the vine when all was said and done. Nevertheless, there were some beautiful wines made, partially from Syrah which thrived in the cooler temperatures. Quality is less consistent, but the top wines are still youthful today.

For additional comparisons, here are the Growing Degree Days for the Horse Heaven Hills AVA, which is a cooler region, from 2012 through 2009:

2012 GDD = 2891 heat units

2011 GDD = 2605 heat units

2010 GDD = 2699 heat units

2009 GDD = 3129 heat units

The Regions

If you want to truly understand Washington Wine, you need to understand the different growing regions. I describe the main American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) below, as well as do my best to list where the wines come from in the reviews in this report.

Columbia Valley AVA

Starting just east of the Cascade Mountain Range and covering most of Central and Southern Washington, the Columbia Valley AVA is the largest AVA in the state and can be thought up as a catch-all. This is one AVA that tells you very little about the wine and is often used when winemakers blend grapes from multiple smaller AVAs.

Yakima Valley AVA

Located in the Columbia Valley AVA, as well as the first Washington State AVA created, the Yakima Valley AVA is the third largest AVA in the state. In the western portion of the Columbia Valley, this cooler region warms substantially as you move east, away from the Cascade Mountains. Notable vineyards here include Mike Sauer's Red Willow Vineyard, Scott Greer's Sheridan Vineyard, and Andrew Will's Two Blondes Vineyard. The wines from this AVA tend to hold onto their acidity and have complex, cool climate characters.

Rattlesnake Hills AVA

The Rattlesnake Hills AVA is located on the northeastern edge of the Yakima Valley and covers a range of mostly south facing, east to west running slopes that lie between 850 feet to upwards of 3,000 feet above sea-level at its highest point. This is a warmer region that's not too dissimilar from Red Mountain (it's slightly cooler), with Cote Bonneville's DuBrul Vineyard being the most noteworthy.

Snipes Mountain AVA

A tiny, relatively new AVA that was created in 2009, Snipes Mountain AVA covers a unique, seven-mile stretch of rocky, basalt, and gravelly soils located between 750 and 1,310 feet above sea level. The most notable vineyards include Harrison Hill Vineyard (which is used by Delille Cellars for their Harrison Hill Bordeaux blend) and Todd Newhouse's Upland Vineyard.



Red Mountain AVA

Located just outside the town of Benton City, Red Mountain AVA covers roughly 4,000 acres all located on a south, southwest facing hillside that runs from roughly 500 feet at its base to upwards of 1,500 feet above sea level at its highest point. This is a hot, windswept region that produces some of the most tannic, concentrated, and mineral-laced wines in the State. Some of the top wines in the State come from this appellation and notable vineyards include Ciel du Cheval (which often produces the most elegant wines of the AVA), Klipsun, Kiona, Force Majeure, Upchurch, Galitzine, and Tapteil, to name just a few.

Wahluke Slope AVA

Including 8,490 acres of vineyards, the Wahluke Slope AVA lies to the north of the Rattlesnake Hills AVA and is a hot, south-facing slope of primarily sandy, gravelly soils. This is one of the warmest AVAs in the state, yet the sandy soils result in a distinct, exotic, gamey style of wine. The most notable producer here is Charles Smith, with notable vineyards including Clifton, Pheasant, Sundance, and Weinbau.

Horse Heaven Hills AVA

A cooler AVA located in the southern portion of the Columbia Valley AVA, on the northern edge of the Columbia River, the Horse Heaven Hills AVA covers a whopping 570,000 acres, with over 11,000 acres under vine. This AVA produces a massive amount of grapes (Columbia Crest and Chateau Ste. Michelle pull heavily from this region) but has some true superstar vineyards, including Champoux, Phinny Hill, Palengat, and The Benches. This region benefits from its proximity to the Columbia River, as well as strong winds due to the Columbia Gorge.

Walla Walla Valley AVA

One of the most well-known AVAs in the State, the Walla Walla Valley AVA is centered around the town of Walla Walla (it stretches into Oregon) and consists of a number of unique terroirs and mesoclimates. The most notable region, and one that received its own sub-appellation just recently, The Rocks (the official name is "The Rocks District of Milton-Freewater") region is located in the southern part of the Walla Walla Valley, around the town of Milton-Freewater, in Oregon. It covers a unique alluvial fan of rocky, pebbly soils not too dissimilar from what can be found in France's Châteauneuf du Pape region. This incredible terroir produces an exotic, perfumed and textured style of wine that's one of the most unique – and identifiable – in the world. Top vineyards include Christophe Baron's Cayuse Vineyards (Armada, En Cerise, etc.), Reynvaan's The Rocks, SJR, and a handful of others. Looking outside the Rocks region, the soil is primarily Loess and differences in terroirs are driven by location (the further east towards the Blue Mountains, the more rainfall) and elevation. Top vineyards in the Walla Walla Valley include Pepper Bridge, Les Collines, Seven Hills, AMaurice, and Leonetti's Loess Vineyard.

This Report

All the wines for this report were tasted between February 2018 and March 2018, in larger appellation tastings, domaine visits, and tastings at my office in Colorado.

As always, thanks for reading and Happy Hunting!

– Jeb Dunnuck

ABEJA

ABEJA	2016	CHARDONNAY	WASHINGTON STATE	\$40	WHITE	92
ABEJA	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$52	RED	93
ABEJA	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HEATHER HILL VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$68	RED	95
ABEJA	2015	MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	RED	92

Abeja is located on the eastern side of the Walla Walla AVA and the wines are made by Daniel Wampfler. It's a great estate and the wines always have a classic, balanced style that ages well.

Abeja makes one of the best Chardonnay in the State and their **2016 Chardonnay** is rock solid. Apple blossom, citrus, brioche, and hints of white flowers all emerge from this medium-bodied, balanced beauty that gains a touch of toasty, nutty notes on the finish. It's a beautiful, classic wine as well as a reference point example for the region.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon** is terrific. A blend of 94% Cabernet Sauvignon and 3% each of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, aged 18 months in French oak, it offers loads of blackcurrants, cassis, and spicy oak aromatics, full body, sweet, soft tannin, and a luscious, silky texture. With terrific purity of fruit

and an already approachable style, drink it over the coming decade or more.

Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Heather Hill Vineyard** offers more tobacco, damp earth, and chocolate, with a similar level of ripe, sexy fruit. Full-bodied, opulent, yet also light on the palate, with nicely integrated acidity, it's another gorgeous wine from this estate as well as one of the finest wines I've tasted from winemaker Daniel Wampfler.

Incorporating 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot and 1% Cabernet Franc, the **2015 Merlot** from Abeja is another terrific wine. Black cherries, currants, candle wax, graphite and white chocolate notes all give way to a ripe, medium-bodied, supple, beautifully textured Merlot that has solid mid-palate depth and sweet tannin. It has the classic profile that's the norm here, terrific purity of fruit, and a good finish. Drink it over the coming 8-10 years. abeja.net

ALUVE

ALUVE	2016	CHARDONNAY ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$34	WHITE	89
ALUVE	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$52	RED	91
ALUVE	2015	PETIT VERDOT ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$52	RED	88

This is a relatively new estate (the first vintage was 2012) and they pull mostly from sites in Walla Walla.

Citrus blossom, honeyed stone fruits, and a hint of leafy herbs all emerge from the **2016 Chardonnay Estate**. Medium-bodied, with bright acidity and a clean finish. It's solid stuff and will drink nicely for 2-3 years.

Coming from the Walla Walla Valley and aged 22 months in 50% new French oak, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate** is a blend of 95% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Merlot aged for 22 months in 50% new French oak barrels. Its inky purple color is followed by a ripe, unctuous, opulent wine

that's loaded with notions of ripe black fruits, chocolate, espresso, and earth. With full-bodied richness, a seamless texture, and loads of sweet fruit, drink it over the coming 8-10 years, and I suspect it will keep even longer.

There's a single barrel of the **2015 Petit Verdot Estate**, which spent 22 months in neutral oak before bottling. Inky purple-colored with lively notes of plums, blueberries, violets, and green herbs, it's medium to full-bodied, has plenty of tannins, a soft mid-palate, and solid length. This is a tough variety to do on its own, but this is certainly a solid, big, steakhouse wine that offers plenty to like. www.aluvewine.com

AMAURICE

AMAURICE	2015	MALBEC GAMACHE VINEYARD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$38	RED	91
AMAURICE	2015	MALBEC AMPARO	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$47	RED	94
AMAURICE	2015	NIGHT OWL	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	94
AMAURICE	2015	ARTIST MORRIS	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$40	RED	92+
AMAURICE	2016	GRENACHE BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$38	RED	91
AMAURICE	2016	SYRAH BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$42	RED	93
AMAURICE	2016	SYRAH FRED	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$45	RED	92

Winemaker Anna Schafer continues to produce classic, impeccable wines from her estate vineyard in Walla Walla, as well as from other top sites in Washington State. Her 2015s all show the purity and focus that's the hallmark of the vintage, yet certainly don't lack for fruit either. They're well worth your time and money.

From a site in the Wahluke Slope, the **2015 Malbec Gamache Vineyard** spent 23 months in 40% new French oak. Its deep purple/ruby color is followed by a dark fruit, mineral, chocolate, and forest floor-scented red that has medium to full-bodied richness, fine, polished tannin, and a great finish. Like all of Anna's wines, it's impeccably made, has terrific purity of fruit, and a great finish.

The **2015 Malbec Amparo** is 100% Malbec that spent 23 months in 40% new French oak. Even inkier in color and glass staining purple, with more blueberries, violets, incense, and floral aromas and flavors, this beauty hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a cashmere-like texture, impeccable balance and stunning purity of fruit. This big, rich, yet still light and graceful Malbec is one of the finest I've tasted from Washington State.

The **2015 Night Owl** checks in as a blend of 32% Merlot, 30% Petit Verdot, 26% Cabernet Franc and the rest Cabernet Sauvignon, all aged 23 months in 40% new French oak. It has a Saint Emilion-like style in its ripe red and black fruits, cedar pencil, dried earth, and spicy aromas and flavors. With medium to full-bodied richness, no hard edges, and ripe, present tannin, it's a beautiful wine from this team. It's going to keep for a decade or more.

The **2015 Artist Morris** from Anna is part of the Artist Series and has a

label that was painted by Carl Morris in 1960. Made from 38% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Merlot, and the balance Cabernet Franc, its deep ruby/purple color gives way to a beautiful, rich 2015 that offers lots of red and black currants, dried earth, graphite, and toasty oak aromas and flavors. Nicely structured, it needs 2-3 years of bottle age and will drink nicely for a decade or more.

The medium ruby/purple-colored **2016 Grenache Boushey Vineyard** comes all from the Boushey Vineyard and was aged 11 months in concrete. Black cherries, currants, dried pepper, and forest floor notes all flow to a silky, pure, beautifully balanced Grenache that has fine tannin and a great finish. It has the class to keep for 8-10 years.

Blueberries, graphite, tobacco, and hints of bay leaf all emerge from the **2016 Syrah Boushey Vineyard**. Medium to full-bodied, it has beautiful purity, fine, fine tannin, and a great finish. A terrific expression of this great site in the Yakima Valley, this cuvée comes entirely from the Boushey Vineyard. It was fermented with 50% whole clusters and brought up all in used French oak.

The **2016 Syrah Fred** comes all from the estate vineyard on the eastern side of Walla Walla and was brought up all in neutral oak. Like the Syrah Boushey Vineyard, it was fermented with 50% stems. Inky purple-colored with classic dark fruits (hints of blue fruits), earth, pepper, and game, this beauty is medium to full-bodied, has impeccable balance, and terrific purity of fruit. With building tannin and nicely integrated acidity, it's going to keep for 10-12 years. amaurice.com

AMAVI CELLARS

AMAVI CELLARS	2015	AMAVI CELLARS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$33	RED	89
AMAVI CELLARS	2015	LES COLLINES SYRAH	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$42	RED	92
AMAVI CELLARS	2015	WALLA WALLA VALLEY SYRAH	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$33	RED	90

As always, these latest releases from Amavi Cellars are terrific wines, as well as good values.

A blend of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Cabernet Franc, 4% Malbec, and the rest Merlot, aged 16 months in mostly French oak (4% was American barrels), the **2015 Amavi Cellars** offers attractive notes of blackcurrants, leafy

herbs, lead pencil, and earth. It's a ripe, medium to full-bodied, nicely textured, classy Cabernet Sauvignon to drink over the coming 7-10 years.

Aged 16 months in mostly neutral barrels (30% new), the **2015 Les Collines Syrah** is a big, ripe, sexy effort that comes from a terrific vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley. Offering lots of black and blue fruits, charcoal, pepper, and

chocolaty aromas and flavors, it's well-made and will keep for 6-8 years.

The base appellation release is the **2015 Walla Walla Valley Syrah**, which incorporates 13% Grenache. It too was brought up mostly in neutral oak. It's

more upfront and open knit compared to the Les Collines and offers lots of plum, spice, and peppery herb aromatics, medium to full-bodied richness, and no hard edges. It's ideal for drinking over the coming 4-5 years. www.amavicellars.com

ANDREW WILL

ANDREW WILL	2014	CIEL DU CHEVAL VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	93+
ANDREW WILL	2014	CHAMPOUX	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	94+
ANDREW WILL	2014	TWO BLONDES	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
ANDREW WILL	2014	MAYS' DISCOVERY VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	94+
ANDREW WILL	2014	SORELLA	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	97
ANDREW WILL	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ESPLOSO	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	92
ANDREW WILL	2015	CHAMPOUX	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	96
ANDREW WILL	2015	TWO BLONDES VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	95
ANDREW WILL	2015	SORELLA CHAMPOUX VINEYARD	COLOMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	96+
ANDREW WILL	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ESPLOSO	COLOMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
ANDREW WILL	2016	MERLOT	COLOMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	90
ANDREW WILL	2016	CABERNET FRANC	COLOMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	90
ANDREW WILL	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLOMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	92

I was able to taste both the 2014s and 2015s from Vashon Island-based Andrew Will, which is run by Chris Camarda. As always, Chris releases two appellation blends (Esploso and Sorella) and a bevy of single vineyard blends from some of the top sites in Washington State (Champoux, Ciel du Cheval, Mays' Discovery, and Two Blondes). Readers looking for classic, age-worthy Bordeaux blends from the United States can't go wrong here and these wines continue to fly too far under the radar. Give these a try!

The **2014 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard** is a rare blend for this estate, only Merlot (61%) and Cabernet Franc (39%). Offering lots of graphite, black cherries, roasted herbs and chocolate, this beauty is full-bodied, textured, and rich on the palate, with beautiful concentration, ripe tannin, and a great finish. It can be drunk today or cellared for 10-15 years.

A little more fresh and lively than the Ciel du Cheval, the **2014 Champoux** has sensational purity in its lifted bouquet of cassis, black raspberries, violets and spring flowers. There's a touch of graphite that develops with time in the glass, and the wine has fine, polished tannin and an elegant, silky texture. It doesn't have the heft of the Ciel du Cheval but shines for its purity and elegance.

Another beautiful wine is the **2014 Two Blondes**. It's a sweetly fruited, supple, downright sexy beauty that offers cassis, graphite, licorice, and hints of leafy herbs. Big, ripe and opulent, with a great texture (it's actually more elegant than the Ciel du Cheval), it will drink beautifully for two decades.

The deep, inky-colored **2014 Mays' Discovery Vineyard** is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Violets, cassis, crushed rocks, dark chocolate, and licorice all emerge from this tight, backward, fresh and focused beauty. It's one of the few 2014s from Chris that required short-term cellaring.

The deep inky colored **2014 Sorella** checks in as a blend of 74% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 11% Cabernet Franc, and the balance Petit Verdot and Malbec. Cassis, smoked earth, graphite, and chocolate all emerge from this full-bodied, concentrated, gorgeously rich and layered beauty that has sweet tannin, beautiful purity, and a great finish. This is a sensational wine.

Offering plenty of cassis, chocolate, spice-box and licorice aromatics, with hints of roasted herbs, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Esploso** is a full-bodied, supple, beautifully pure Cabernet Sauvignon that has plenty of

tannins and a great finish. It's another terrific wine from this estate that can be drunk today or cellared for a decade.

The **2015 Champoux** is a beauty. Concentrated, rich, full-bodied and layered, it offers a rocking nose of blackcurrants, graphite, lead pencil, iodine, and salty minerality. Ripe, rounded, and opulent, yet with good freshness and purity, it needs 3-4 years of bottle age and will keep for two decades.

Also deeply colored, the inky colored **2015 Two Blondes Vineyard** is another truly gorgeous wine from this estate. Crème de cassis, blueberries, violets, crushed rocks and chocolate all give way to a full-bodied, concentrated, rich, opulent 2015 that still holds onto a classic, structured style. It's the finest version of this cuvée I've tasted.

The flagship **2015 Sorella Champoux Vineyard** is another include Cabernet Sauvignon dominated blend that's up with the crème de la crème of the vintage. Cassis, black raspberries, toasted spice, candle wax and graphite notes all emerge from this tight, concentrated, fresh beauty that really needs 4-5 years of bottle age. A wine that gains depth with time in the glass, it has fine tannin, beautiful balance, and a classic, elegant style.

Made by Will Camarda, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Esploso** (100% Cabernet Sauvignon, which is a change from last year) comes all from Champoux Vineyard aged in 50% new French oak. A ripe, sexy bouquet of black currants, spice-box, dried flowers, incense and graphite notes all emerge from this beautiful, elegant, si ky style that's just a joy to drink. It's another great vintage of this cuvée.

The **2016 Merlot** is deep ruby/purple-colored and offers a terrific bouquet of ripe plums, black cherries, spice, and hints of vanilla. Beautifully balanced, medium-bodied, silky, and polished on the palate, it's a terrific wine.

Deep purple/violet colored, the **2016 Cabernet Franc** is also beautiful. Black raspberries, violets, spring flowers, and some toasted spice notes all flow to a fresh, elegant, silky style. It has beautiful purity, fine tannin, and a good finish.

Blueberry, violets, blood orange, and candied orange peel all emerge from the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon**. It's beautifully pure, fresh, and elegant, yet also has terrific concentration and depth. It's just another balanced, beautiful wine from this estate. www.andrewwill.com

ARDOR CELLARS

ARDOR CELLARS	2015	SYRAH STONEY VINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	93
ARDOR CELLARS	2015	SYRAH LAWRENCE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$50	RED	92
ARDOR CELLARS	2015	SYRAH ART DEN HOED VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$50	RED	91
ARDOR CELLARS	2015	SYRAH RED HEAVEN VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	\$50	RED	91
ARDOR CELLARS	2015	SYRAH QUATERNARIUM RESERVE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$70	RED	93

I found all these 2015 from Ardor Cellars, which are made by the talented Aryn Morell, to be outstanding.

From a site in the rocks region of Walla Walla, the **2015 Syrah Stoney Vine Vineyard** is 100% Syrah, fermented with 50% stems, that spent 16 months in neutral 500-liter French oak barrels. Classic Rocks notes of black currants, tobacco, bacon fat, and gamey olive all flow to a full-bodied, rich, expansive beauty that has loads to love. Readers looking to see what the Rock's terroir is all about should give this a whirl.

From sites in the Colombia Valley, the **2015 Syrah Lawrence Vineyard** spent 16 months in neutral 500-liter French oak barrels. Plums, blueberries, peppery herbs, and some vanilla oak notes all emerge from this ripe, sexy Syrah that has medium to full-bodied richness, good acidity and plenty of length. It has terrific purity and it's straight up delicious, with a charming, gulpable style.

The **2015 Syrah Art Den Hoed Vineyard** (16 months in neutral barrels) offers a more lifted, perfumed style, with lots of plum, violets, licorice, and vanilla aromas and flavors. It's another ripe, rounded, delicious wine.

From a site on Red Mountain, the **2015 Syrah Red Heaven Vineyard** (100% Syrah fermented with 10% stems and aged in neutral barrels) offers the classic savory, mineral, dried earth style that's the hallmark of this estate. Blackcurrants, scorched earth, charcoal, and spice all give way to a ripe, nicely concentrated, supple red that has a great texture. It's going to benefit from a year in bottle and keep through 2025.

The top cuvée of the estate, the **2015 Syrah Quaternarium Reserve** saw a touch of stems (21%) as well as 20 months all in neutral oak. It offers loads of tobacco and cured meat notes, full-bodied richness, a rounded, sexy texture, and terrific core and ripe, darker fruits. It's already access ble but is going to drink nicely for 8-10 years. www.ardorcellars.com

ASHAN CELLARS

ASHAN CELLARS	2016	CHARDONNAY BARREL FERMENTED	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	87
ASHAN CELLARS	2016	CHARDONNAY CELILO VINEYARD	COLUMBIA GORGE	\$45	WHITE	90
ASHAN CELLARS	2016	CHARDONNAY BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$45	WHITE	85
ASHAN CELLARS	2016	CHARDONNAY CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	WHITE	89

Ashan Cellars is Chris Gorman's label focused exclusively on Chardonnay. His 2015s, which I tasted last year, were slightly more successful than these 2016s, yet these are still solid, enjoyable wines.

The least expensive Chardonnay is the **2016 Chardonnay Barrel Fermented**, which comes from a mix of the single vineyards. It offers attractive stone fruits, buttered citrus, and a touch of leafy herbs in a medium-bodied, supple, simple style. It's enjoyable, and certainly more drinkable than some of the single vineyards.

The **2016 Chardonnay Celilo Vineyard** comes from the cooler Columbia Gorge region of eastern Washington and was brought up all in barrel. It has a vibrant, juicy style as well as notes of caramelized peach, citrus blossom, and

white flowers. Medium-bodied, clean and balanced on the palate, with some background oak, it's an enjoyable, solid effort.

The **2016 Chardonnay Boushey Vineyard** is from a site in the Yakima Valley and was also brought up all in barrel. Its deeper gold color is followed by a honeyed, ripe, exotic wine that has an almost dessert style in its medium to full-bodied, rich, thick texture. It lacks vibrancy and zip, but could certainly function as an aperitif or dessert wine.

The **2016 Chardonnay Conner Lee Vineyard** is another richer styled effort. Buttered apple, peach, and mulled citrus notes all give way to a medium to full-bodied, textured, balanced effort that offers plenty of charm. Nevertheless, none of these Chardonnays are as good as the 2015s last year. Ashancellars.com

AVENNIA

AVENNIA	2016	OLIANE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$28	WHITE	88
AVENNIA	2017	LA PERLE RHONE WHITE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	WHITE	90-92
AVENNIA	2017	SAUVIGNON BLANC OLIANE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	WHITE	91-93
AVENNIA	2014	CABERNET FRANC CHAMPOUX VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$50	RED	94
AVENNIA	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED WILLOW	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	97
AVENNIA	2015	VALERY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$50	RED	92+
AVENNIA	2015	GRAVURA	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$38	RED	92
AVENNIA	2015	SESTINA	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$65	RED	95+
AVENNIA	2015	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$50	RED	97
AVENNIA	2015	JUSTINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$38	RED	91
AVENNIA	2015	SYRAH LE CORBEAU DISCOVERY VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	92-94
AVENNIA	2015	CABERNET FRANC CHAMPOUX VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	95
AVENNIA	2016	JUSTINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	92-94
AVENNIA	2016	SYRAH LE COREAU DISCOVERY VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	93-95
AVENNIA	2016	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-97+
AVENNIA	2016	VALERY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	92-94
AVENNIA	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON SESTINA	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	93-95
AVENNIA	2016	CABERNET FRANC CHAMPOUX VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	93-95
AVENNIA	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-96
AVENNIA	2010	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	93
AVENNIA	2011	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	95
AVENNIA	2012	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	96
AVENNIA	2013	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	93
AVENNIA	2014	SYRAH ARNAUT BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	96

I continue to consider Chris Peterson's Avennia estate to be one of the best in Washington State and he's been making world-class wines for a number of years now. He releases two white wines: A Sauvignon Blanc called Oliane and a Rhone blend of Roussanne and Marsanne called La Perle. The reds are broken up into a Rhône/Bordeaux groups, with the Rhône's including a Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre blend called Justine, and two single-vineyard Syrahs, the Le Corbeau from Mays' Discovery Vineyard in Horse Heaven Hills and the Arnaud from Dick Boushey's Boushey Vineyard on the western side of the Yakima Valley. The Bordeaux releases are built around the appellation blends and include the entry-level Gravura, Valery (Merlot dominated), and Sestina (Cabernet Sauvignon dominated). In addition, Peterson also makes a pure Cabernet Franc from Champoux Vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills and a pure Cabernet Sauvignon from very old vines in the Red Willow Vineyard. As I hope these reviews show, these are brilliant wines readers need to seek out.

Chris's **2016 Oliane** is a steely, mineral-scented effort that has plenty of citrus peel and mineral aromatics, medium-bodied richness, and nicely integrated acidity. Made from 100% Sauvignon Blanc brought up in a mix of neutral oak, concrete, and new French oak, drink it over the coming 2-3 years.

A blend of 55% Roussanne and 45% Marsanne, from Sagemoor and Boushey vineyards, the **2017 La Perle Rhone White** offers solid lemon curd, pineapple, and citrus notes in a richer, yet still fresh, lively style. There are only about 100 cases made, but it's a beautiful, classy white.

A blend of Boushey Vineyard and Red Willow, the 100% varietal **2017 Sauvignon Blanc Oliane** offers racy, lively notes of citrus, lime, and crushed rocks. Medium-bodied, fresh, lively, yet textured, with good density, it will benefit from a year of bottle age and keep for a decade.

The **2014 Cabernet Franc Champoux Vineyard** was brought up in 25% second fill barrels, with the balance in neutral oak. It has an almost Loire-like

slant in its ripe black fruits, chocolate, and herbal/tobacco aromas and flavors. These give way to a medium to full-bodied, elegant, concentrated Cabernet Franc that has a singular character. There are only 100 cases but it's well worth seeking out.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Willow** is an incredible wine that's up with some of the greatest Cabernet Sauvignon made in Washington State. Made from 100% Cabernet aged in new French oak, it offers a seamless, layered, full-bodied style to go with awesome notes of crème de cassis, graphite, crushed rocks, and hints of tobacco. Possessing remarkable purity of fruit, building tannin, and a rich yet elegant profile, it needs 3-4 years of bottle age and will shine for two decades! Hats off to winemaker Chris Peterson. There are only 100 cases produced.

The **2015 Valery** (70% Merlot and 30% Cabernet Franc brought up in 30% new French oak) offers a deep, herbal, black-fruited, coffee bean and mineral-driven style. Medium to full-bodied, nicely concentrated, and fresh on the palate, with fine tannin, give this elegant, classic, slightly old-school effort a year or two of bottle age and enjoy over the following decade.

The entry-level Bordeaux blend is the **2015 Gravura**, made from 47% Merlot, 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the balance Cabernet Franc and aged 20 months in 70% new French oak. It's the most open-knit, sexy, and voluptuous of the 2015s and has tons of ripe red and black fruits, chocolate, earth, and assorted spicy aromas and flavors. Rich, medium to full-bodied, and beautifully textured, drink it over the coming decade.

The flagship **2015 Sestina** checks in as 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc brought up in 60% new French oak. Gorgeous notes of blackcurrants, black cherries, graphite, wet river rock, and leafy herbs all emerge from this beautifully balanced, fresh, classic wine that's still tight and backward. It's not a blockbuster but has building richness and tannin, as well as a great finish. Give bottles 2-3 years and enjoy over the

following 10-15.

From one of my favorite sites in Yakima Valley, the **2015 Syrah Arnaut Boushey Vineyard** (100% Syrah aged 16 months in 15% new French oak) is inky purple-colored with a gorgeous bouquet of ripe black raspberries, plums, white pepper, spice, and scorched earth. It's deep, full-bodied, and beautifully concentrated, with fine tannin, and has a great finish, all making for a brilliant Washington State Syrah. It's going to keep for 10-15 years.

The entry-level Rhône blend is the **2015 Justine**, 55% Grenache, 32% Mourvèdre and the rest Syrah brought up in neutral French oak puncheons and barrels. Black cherries, blueberries, spice box, and dried, peppery herbs notes all flow to a pure, medium to full-bodied, elegant red that has nicely integrated acidity and a great finish. It's ideal for drinking over the coming 4-7 years.

First made in 2014 with the idea of producing a terroir-driven Syrah, the **2015 Syrah le Corbeau Discovery Vineyard** comes from a contiguous parcel in the Discovery Vineyard and was brought up in a mix of mostly neutral puncheons and barrels. It's another deep, rich 2015 that offers lots of black fruits, crushed violets, and charred meat-like aromas and flavors. With medium to full-bodied richness, a rounded, supple texture, and a great finish, it's certainly going to be an outstanding Syrah and should keep for a decade.

The **2015 Cabernet Franc Champoux Vineyard** is another terrific wine from one of the top vineyards in the Horse Heaven Hills. Terrific notes of blackcurrants, black cherries, leafy herbs, iodine, and spring flowers all emerge from this singular, ripe, beautifully polished and elegant Cabernet Franc. With plenty of oomph, ripe, present tannin, and a great finish, it's going to drink nicely for 10-15 years.

A blend of 56% Grenache, 31% Mourvèdre, 13% Syrah brought up all in older oak, the **2016 Justine** offers a great core of black fruits as well as lots of peppery herbs, earth, and classic meatiness. It looks to be a great vintage for this cuvée.

All from the Horse heaven hills and first made in 2014, the tiny production **2016 Syrah Le Coreau Discovery Vineyard** offers a deep, purple/plum color as well as a smoking bouquet of currants, lavender, tapenade, and classic cool-climate Syrah gaminess. Rich, full-bodied, beautifully polished, elegant and seamless, it's a smoking Syrah.

Also deeply colored, the **2016 Syrah Arnaut Boushey Vineyard** is a sensational, meaty, savory, complex beauty. Full-bodied, with sweet tannin, no hard edges and beautiful purity, it has fine, fine tannin, a bloody, salty character, and a great finish. It's rocking stuff.

A blend of 70% Merlot (from Boushey Vineyard and 1986 plantings) and 30% Cabernet Franc (Champoux Vineyard from 1997 plantings), the **2016 Valery** offers a dark, plummy, meaty, damp earth, and bay leaf scented bouquet. This gives way to a medium to full-bodied, Pomerol look-alike that has beautiful purity, fine tannin, and a great finish.

The **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Sestina** checks in as 77% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, and 6% Cabernet Franc that will spend 20 months in 60% new French oak. This is the first year this will cuvée be labeled as a Cabernet Sauvignon. Blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, iodine, and hints of olive all give way to a rich, medium to full-bodied, concentrated, yet elegant wine that's going to age for 20+ years.

The **2016 Cabernet Franc Champoux Vineyard** is also terrific. Plums, blueberries, flowers, damp earth, and cedar notes all emerge from this deeply colored, beautiful, plum, luxuriously textured beauty that has fine tannin and a great finish.

The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Willow Vineyard is 100% Red Willow Cabernet Sauvignon that will spend roughly 20 months in close to 100% new French oak. Blackcurrants, smoked herbs, chocolate, and graphite notes all give way to a full-bodied, plump, rich, concentrated effort that's going to be better with short-term cellaring and keep for two decades.

In addition to the current releases, I was also able to taste a small retrospective of Chris's Arnaut Syrah from the Boushey Vineyard in the Yakima Valle. Starting out, the **2010 Arnaut Syrah Boushey Vineyard** sports a deep purple color as well as classic, cool-climate notes of leafy herbs, white pepper, cedarwood, and assorted darker fruits. It's full-bodied, has beautiful freshness and purity, as well as length.

From a cooler, challenging vintage, the **2011 Arnaut Syrah Boushey Vineyard** is a rock star Syrah that does everything right. Not harvested until November 2, it offers up classic Syrah notes of blackberries, currants, white pepper, and charred meats. It's more elegant and seamless than the 2010, yet still has fantastic concentration, medium to full-bodied richness, and a great finish.

The **2012 Arnaut Syrah Boushey Vineyard** is a blockbuster and has more richness and depth than the 2011, as well as more finesse than the 2010. Offering full-bodied aromas and flavors of crème de cassis, violets, tobacco leaf and ground pepper, this beauty has remarkable purity of fruit, an expansive, opulent texture, sweet tannin, and a brilliant finish. It's drinking great today but certainly has another decade or more of longevity.

Reminding me of a top Cornas, the **2013 Arnaut Syrah Boushey Vineyard** has lots of bloody, meaty notes as well as ripe dark fruits, wild herbs, and peppery aromas and flavors. Complex, full-bodied, and layered, with terrific purity (which is a hallmark of all of Chris's wines), it's another terrific Syrah to enjoy over the coming decade.

The **2014 Syrah Arnaut Boushey Vineyard** is cut from the same cloth as the 2012 and has a ripe, full-bodied, sexy profile. Black fruits, scorched earth, violets, and spice all give way to a beautifully layered, seamless Syrah that shows more and more structure with time in the glass. I suspect this might shut down with 2-3 years of bottle age, so try a bottle now or hide them in the cellar for 4-6 years. www.avennia.com

B. LEIGHTON

B. LEIGHTON	2015	GRATITUDE OLSEN BROTHER'S VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	93
B. LEIGHTON	2015	SYRAH OLSEN BROTHER'S VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	93
B. LEIGHTON	2015	PETIT VERDOT OLSEN BROTHER'S VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	96

Brennon Leighton, who's one of the driving forces behind the sensational quality of the Charles Smith releases, produces three cuvées under his own label: a Rhône blend Gratitude cuvée, a 100% Syrah, and a 100% Petit Verdot. All the grapes are sourced from the Olsen Brother's Vineyard in Columbia Valley.

A field blend of 70% Mourvèdre, 25% Grenache and 5% Syrah, the **2015 Gratitude Olsen Brother's Vineyard** saw all native fermentations, no destemming, and aging all in neutral barrels. From a higher elevation vineyard just west of Red Mountain, it offers a ruby color to go with a savory, spicy, layered bouquet that includes loads of caramelized cherries, currants, licorice, and cured meats. Complex, full-bodied, layered, and rich,

drink it over the coming decade.

The 100% varietal (all Phelps clone) **2015 Syrah Olsen Brother's Vineyard** sports a deep purple color to go with a minty, tobacco, currants, and darker fruit-driven profile. Deep, rich and full-bodied, it has notable freshness and purity, fine tannin, and a great finish.

Deep purple-colored, the **2015 Petit Verdot Olsen Brother's Vineyard** is 100% varietal that spent 22 months in 40% new French oak. It's a beautiful wine loaded with notions of blueberries, leafy herbs, hints of wet stone, and graphite. It's full-bodied, gorgeously pure, and v brant, with a focused, balanced style. It's as elegant, pure, and seamless as this variety gets. Hats off to winemaker Brenna Leighton. bleightonwines.com

BETZ FAMILY WINERY

BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2014	CLOS DE BETZ	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	95
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON PERE DE FAMILLE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	97
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HEART OF THE HILL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	97+
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	CUVEE FRANGIN	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	90
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	BESOLEIL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	91-93
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	SYRAH LA SERENNE	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	SYRAH LA COTE ROUSSE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	96
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	SYRAH LA COTE PATRIARCHE	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	95
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	CLOS DE BETZ	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	93+
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON PERE DE FAMILLE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	97
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HEART OF THE HILL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	98+
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	POSSIBILITY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	91
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	BESOLEIL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	92
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	SYRAH LA SERENNE	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	96

BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	SYRAH LA COTE ROUSSE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	95+
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	SYRAH LA COTE PATRIARCHE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	95+
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	SYRAH ANCIENT STONES	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	93-96
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	CLOS DE BETZ	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	93-95
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON PÈRE DE FAMILLE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97+
BETZ FAMILY WINERY	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HEART OF THE HILL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	97-99

Owned by the Griessel family since 2011, Betz Family Winery still has Washington State's incredible ambassador of Bob Betz firmly involved in the winery, with the wines made by the talented Louis Skinner since 2013. This is an undeniable reference point estate for the Washington State and the wines go from strength to strength. Today, they are at the top of the hierarchy in just about every vintage. In addition, while it would be easy to sit back and maintain the status quo at an established estate like this, they continue to push for improvements in quality at every level, purchasing an optical sorting machine in 2015, creating a second wine, doing an even more strict selection for their top cuvées, and experimenting with stems in the ferments as well as with different sizes (and types) of vessels in their vinification and aging regimes. This is a terrific, world-class estate that readers need to try, and both the 2014s and 2015s are incredible wines.

Including the highest percentage of Merlot ever, the **2014 Clos de Betz** checks in as 71% Merlot, 19% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the balance Petit Verdot. It offers a beautiful bouquet of cassis, licorice, violets, and earthy, herbal notes as well as a medium to full-bodied, incredibly elegant style on the palate. It's tight and closed, yet has remarkable purity and depth. Give bottles 2-3 years of bottle age.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Père de Famille** is a cellar selection of top barrels from throughout the Columbia Valley. It's deeper colored than the Clos de Betz and has sensational notes of crème de cassis, licorice, graphite, and assorted floral notes. With terrific purity, finesse and elegance, this full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon is going to evolve for two decades or more.

I loved the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Heart of the Hill** last year and it didn't disappoint this go around either. There are only 10 barrels of this elixir, which offers a huge nose of black and blue fruits, crushed rocks and graphite. Deep, powerful, full-bodied, and yet still incredibly elegant, it has building structure and isn't for those seeking instant gratification. Forget bottles for 7-8 years, but it will keep for two decades or more.

The entry-level cuvée is the **2015 Cuvée Frangin**, a mix of both Bordeaux varieties and Rhône varieties. It's a juicy, medium to full-bodied, rounded red wine that gives up lots of red and black fruits, plenty of herbal notes, and background spice. Enjoy it over the coming 4-5 years.

The **2015 Besoleil** is not yet bottled and they've pushed the bottling date back so this cuvée will now see 16-18 months in barrel. It's a southern Rhône look-alike and gives up terrific notes of kirsch, herbes de Provence, licorice and spice in a medium to full-bodied, elegant, textured package.

Coming from the Boushey Vineyard in the Yakima Valley, the **2015 Syrah La Serenne** is full-bodied, fresh and elegant, with classic cooler climate Syrah notes of peppery herbs, darker berry fruits, lavender, spring flowers, and smoked earth. It has terrific complexity and glides over the palate, making for a sensational Syrah from Washington State. Drink it anytime over the coming decade.

As usual, the **2015 Syrah La Cote Rouse** offers a more masculine, structured, mineral-driven style. This cuvée comes all from the warmer Red Mountain AVA and is a power-packed 2015 loaded with notions of black, black fruits, scorched earth, graphite, and charred meats. It's a big, rich, inky effort, yet like all the wines from this estate has awesome purity of fruit and is impeccably balanced.

The **2015 Syrah La Cote Patriarche** is a small step back from the sensational 2014, yet is still an incredible wine. Coming from some of the oldest Syrah vines in the state, planted in the Red Willow Vineyard in the Yakima Valley, it offers beautiful blue fruits, spring flowers, licorice, and sappy herb-like aromas and flavors. It's fresh, elegant, and silky, with fabulous purity of fruit and a medium to full-bodied richness and depth. It's a beautiful Syrah to enjoy over the coming 10-15 years.

Moving to the Bordeaux blends, the **2015 Clos de Betz** is 75% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Petit Verdot. This medium to full-bodied, nicely textured, elegant 2015 gives up lots of plum, chocolate, leafy herbs, and wet rock-like aromas and flavors. It's going to drink nicely on release.

The **2015 Père de Famille** is a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petit Verdot, and 4% Merlot that's mostly from Red Mountain aged 20 months in 70%

new French oak. This inky colored effort is packed and stacked, with deep blackberry and currant fruits intermixed with lots of graphite, crushed rock, and minerals as well as smoky, violets aromas and flavors. This full-bodied beauty has gorgeous purity and elegance. It needs 2-4 years of bottle age and will keep for two decades.

Made from 100% Kiona Heart of the Hill Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon aged 20 months in new French oak, the inky colored **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Heart of the Hill** is a spectacular wine that's up with the crème de la crème of the vintage. Blackcurrants, blackberries, crushed rocks, graphite, and lead pencil notes all emerge from this full-bodied, rich, opulent, powerful Cabernet Sauvignon that's going to keep for 2-3 decades. Bravo.

What was previously called Cuvée Frangin, the **2016 Possibility** checks in as a blend of 40% each of Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, with the balance Merlot and Cinsault. It's a ripe, upfront, juicy, delicious effort that has a classic inky purple Betz color, great notes of plums, blueberries, violets, and spice, medium to full-bodied richness, and a clean finish. It's incredibly high quality and a great introduction to the wines of this estate.

Moving more and more from Olsen Vineyard, which is 20 miles northwest of Red Mountain (where they love working with the grower, who is proactive and responsive), the medium ruby/purple-colored **2016 Besoleil** is 55% Grenache, 23% Mourvèdre, 11% Syrah and the rest Cinsault, all aged in a mix of neutral barrels. It offers beautiful notes of red plums, blueberries, white and black pepper and herbs de Provence, medium to full-bodied richness, a silky, elegant style, and integrated acidity. It's another beautiful vintage of this wine that will keep for a decade.

Coming all from Boushey Vineyard, the **2016 Syrah La Serenne** saw plenty of whole clusters as well as 11 months in French oak, 40% new. It's deep inky colored with a smoking bouquet of blueberries, spring flowers, gunpowder like minerality, and liquid violets. With classic gamey Syrah character, plenty of pepper, medium to full-bodied richness, and a heavenly, silky texture, this might just be the finest vintage of this cuvée to date.

The **2016 Syrah La Cote Rouse** is built around clone 99, all from Red Mountain, that saw 45% whole clusters in the fermentation. This cuvée, which is also moving more and more toward Ciel du Cheval, is 88% from this terrific site. It's another inky purple colored red with a beautiful bouquet of black raspberries, toasted spice, dried herbs, and mineral aromas and flavors. Still tight, backward and reserved, yet with beautiful potential, this full-bodied, ripe, layered Syrah needs 2-3 years of bottle age and will keep for 15+ years.

The **2016 Syrah La Côte Patriarche** is, as always, all from the Red Willow Vineyard, fermented with one-third whole clusters, and the 2016 was brought up in 50% new oak, which is slightly higher than normal. Violets, blueberries, spring flowers, and exotic fruit characteristics all emerge from this inky, tight, full-bodied effort that has stunning purity of fruit as well as a great finish.

From a new site purchased in 2014 (it was planted in 2006), the **2016 Syrah Ancient Stones** is still aging in 228-liter barrels. It offers beautiful tobacco, plums, dried flower and lavender notes as well as a rich, full-bodied, pure, elegant, layered style on the palate. It's another singular effort from the Rocks region of Walla Walla that's going to age beautifully.

The **2016 Clos de Betz** checks in as a blend of 70% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Petit Verdot that's scheduled to be bottled in June of this year. It's a big, exuberant, sexy wine loaded with notions of blueberries, spring flowers, plums, and violets, aromas and flavors. It's a beautiful barrel sample.

Another gorgeous wine, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Père de Famille** is a blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Petit Verdot and 5% Merlot mostly from Red Mountain. Pure crème de cassis, graphite, and liquid violet notes all give way to a primary, rich, unctuous beauty that stays pure and polished. It has incredible potential.

The **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Heart of the Hill** has an inky, inky color that I'm sure makes winemaker Bob Betz proud. Crème de cassis, lead pencil, wood smoke, and violet notes all emerge from this massive, deep, rich, killer Cabernet Sauvignon that has sweet tannin, a stacked, opulent mid-palate, and stunning purity. My money is on this being one of the top wines in the vintage. www.betzfamilywinery.com

BLOCK WINES

BLOCK WINES	2016	CHENIN BLANC GNARL BLOCK ROTHROCK VINEYARD	WASHINGTON	NA	WHITE	87
BLOCK WINES	2016	GRENAHE GOLDEN BLOCK BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	86
BLOCK WINES	2016	SYRAH ANKLEROLLER BLOCK STONEY VINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA	NA	RED	91
BLOCK WINES	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON DISCOVERY VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	89

A solid white, the **2016 Chenin Blanc** from Block Wines sports a light gold color as well as mineral-laced notes of citrus and leafy herbs. It's medium to light bodied, has good acidity, and a clean, yet short finish, all pointing to a near-term drinker that will do nicely on the dinner table.

The light ruby/translucent **2016 Grenache Golden Block Boushey Vineyard** offers an interesting, charming style as well as lots of light red fruits, garrigue, and herbes de Provence-like aromas and flavors. Reminiscent of a spicy Pinot Noir (we're almost to Tavel like-character), it's best drunk over the

coming 3-4 years.

Showing plenty of Rocks character, the **2016 Syrah Ankeroller Block Stoney Vine Vineyard** sports a medium ruby color to go with classic notes of sour cherries, peat moss, exotic spice, and peppered meat. Medium-bodied, si ky, beautifully balanced, and with plenty of length, it's a total charmer to drink over the coming 4-6 years.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Discovery Vineyard** comes from a cooler site in the Horse Heaven Hills and offers a firmer, tight style in its dark plum and blackberry fruits, cedarwood, violets, and scorched earth aromas and flavors. With medium-bodied richness, nicely integrated acidity, and a good finish, it's a solid Cabernet that should benefit from a year or so in bottle and drink nicely through 2025.

BORNE OF FIRE

BORNE OF FIRE	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$20	RED	90
A blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Malbec, the 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon is a terrific value that offers loads of up-front cassis and cherry fruits, plenty of leafy herbs and graphite notes, medium-bodied richness,			and a soft, supple, seamless style. It's a terrific value that has solid Cabernet character. Drink it over the coming 4-5 years.			

BRIAN CARTER CELLARS

BRIAN CARTER CELLARS	2016	ORIANA	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	90
BRIAN CARTER CELLARS	2013	LE COURSIER	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$40	RED	93
BRIAN CARTER CELLARS	2013	ACE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$38	RED	92
BRIAN CARTER CELLARS	2013	TUTOROSSO	WASHINGTON STATE	\$35	RED	91
BRIAN CARTER CELLARS	2014	SYRAH ONE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$50	RED	90
BRIAN CARTER CELLARS	2014	CORRIDA	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$34	RED	91

The light gold colored **2016 Oriana** from the talented Brian Carter checks in as a blend of 53% Viognier, 34% Roussanne, and 12% Riesling that spent 6 months in a mix of neutral oak and tanks. You clearly see the quality of a winemaker with whites, and Brian always passes with flying colors. White peach, pineapple, white flowers, and honey blossom notes all emerge from this medium-bodied, pure, elegant white that has plenty of fruit and texture as well as purity. Drink it over the coming year or two.

The **2013 Le Coursier** checks in as a blend of 54% Merlot, 22% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc, 6% Malbec, and 4% Petit Verdot all aged 22 months in French and European oak, 40% new. Deep purple/violet tinged with a seamless, si ky style in its blueberry, black cherry, violet, and incense aromas and flavors, it has full-bodied richness, sweet tannin, and a si ky, pure, layered style.

A new wine from this estate, the **2013 ACE** is 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 45% Syrah aged just under two years in 30% new French oak. It offers a deep purple/violet color to go with impressive amounts of blackberry and black cherry fruits, spice box, and hints of oak. It's another seamless, pure, elegant,

beautifully textured and hedonistic wine.

The **2013 Tutorosso** is the Tuscan styled red from 66% Sangiovese, 18% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 16% Syrah, all brought up in 20% new French oak with the balance in used barrels. Black cherries, cedar wood, dried herbs, and savory meat notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, silky, elegant wine that has lots of sweet fruit, yet stays pretty, pure, and elegant on the palate.

Blackberries, dark chocolate, and peppery herb notes all emerge from the **2014 Syrah ONE**, 100% Syrah that spent 22 months in 20% new French barrels. Medium to full-bodied, ripe, concentrated and sexy on the palate, with bright acidity, it should drink nicely for 8-10 years.

Carter's Spanish rendition is the **2014 Corrida**, a blend of 66% Tempranillo, 18% Graciano, 10% Garnacha, and 6% Cabernet Sauvignon that spent the usual 22 months in a mix of French, American, and Russian oak. Black cherries, currants, toasted bread, spice, and dried flower notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, silky, pure and polished beauty that has fine tannin and a great texture. It's another well made, impressive wine from the estate that's going to keep for a decade or more. www.briancartercellars.com

BUTY

BUTY	2016	SEMILLON, SAUVIGNON & MUSCADELLE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	88
BUTY	2016	CHARDONNAY CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$42	WHITE	90
BUTY	2014	COLUMBIA REDIVIVA PHINNY HILL VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$50	RED	93
BUTY	2015	MERLOT & CABERNET FRANC CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	RED	93

Winemaker Chris Dowsett continues to make a solid set of wines for Buty.

Looking first at the whites and a blend of 62% Semillon, 25% Sauvignon Blanc and the rest Muscadelle, the **2016 Semillon, Sauvignon & Muscadelle** is medium gold-colored and reveals notes of sautéed stone fruits, dried herbs, and a hint of buttered lemon. Medium-bodied, rounded, and nicely textured, it should be versatile on the dinner table and is a character-filled dry white.

Buty's **2016 Chardonnay Conner Lee Vineyard** is excellent, with a lively citrus, mint, wet stone and leafy herb style as well as v brant acidity on the palate. It's a fresh, clean, balanced Chardonnay I suspect will keep nicely for 2-3 years, maybe longer.

The deep ruby/purple-colored **2014 Columbia Rediviva Phinny Hill**

Vineyard (80% Cabernet Sauvignon and 20% Syrah aged for 19 months in 37% new French oak barrels) offers a very fresh, lively bouquet of black raspberries, white pepper, cedary oak, and incense. Perfumed, lively, and nuanced, it has plenty of heft and richness on the palate, nicely integrated acidity, and fine tannin, all making for a beautiful Washington State blend that will keep for a decade or more.

A blend of 63% Merlot and 37% Cabernet Franc aged 15 months in one-third new French oak, the **2015 Merlot & Cabernet Franc Conner Lee Vineyard** is a beauty! Black cherries, currants, tobacco, and damp earth characteristics all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, beautifully balanced red. With solid depth of fruit, a clean, elegant style, and fine tannin, it's going to cruise in the cellar for 10-12 years. www.butywinery.com

CADENCE

CADENCE	2015	CODA	RED MOUNTAIN	\$28	RED	90
CADENCE	2015	TAPTEIL	RED MOUNTAIN	\$45	RED	92
CADENCE	2015	CIEL DU CHEVAL	RED MOUNTAIN	\$45	RED	93
CADENCE	2015	BEL CANTO	RED MOUNTAIN	\$60	RED	94+
CADENCE	2015	CAMERATA	RED MOUNTAIN	\$60	RED	95

Ben Smith's Cadence wines fly too far under the radar and these are classic, singular, age-worthy wines from Washington State. They deserve more attention in the market.

Cadence's entry-level cuvée is the **2015 Coda**, which is 46% Cabernet Franc, 28% Merlot, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon and the balance Petit Verdot, aged in 45% new French oak. Always a good value, the 2015 offers deep, rich aromas and flavors of blackcurrants, black cherries, graphite, dried earth, and hints of chocolate. With medium to full-bodied, richness, a mouthfilling, balanced texture, and a great finish, it's a beautiful wine that can be drunk anytime over the coming 7-8 years (and probably longer).

A blend of 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Cabernet Franc and the balance Merlot from a vineyard on Red Mountain (all the fruit for the Cadence wines comes from Red Mountain), the **2015 Taptail** offers a pretty, fresh, silky

personality to go with plenty of black and blue fruits, violets, and leafy herbs. It's clean, impeccably balanced, and already drinking nicely. It's going to keep for a decade or more.

Violets, Asian spice, incense, and red and black plum notes all emerge from the **2015 Ciel du Cheval**, which is incredibly floral and perfumed aromatically. With a medium to full-bodied, silky, elegant style on the palate, fine tannin, and good acidity, it's another impressive wine from Cadence that's going to keep for 10-15 years. This cuvée checks in as 33% each of Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon, with the balance an even split of Merlot and Petit Verdot. It spent 18 months in 40% new French oak.

Starting off the reserve cuvées, the **2015 Bel Canto** is 56% Merlot and 44% Cabernet Franc. It's a rich, layered, beautifully concentrated effort that has classic Red Mountain character in its savory currants and black cherry fruits,

dried violets, graphite, and mineral-laced aromas and flavors. With full-bodied richness, a layered, multi-dimensional texture and a great finish, it has enough tannin to warrant 3-4 years of bottle age, and I suspect it will cruise in the cellar for at least 10-15 years.

The **2015 Camerata** (90% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Merlot brought up

in 50% new French oak) offers more classic Cabernet Sauvignon notes of blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, cedar, and earth. It's another rich, beautifully concentrated, deep wine that has building tannin, notable freshness, and a great finish. As with the Bel Canto, it's going to benefit from short-term cellaring and keep for 15+ years. cadencewinery.com

CAIRDEAS WINERY

CAIRDEAS WINERY	2016	NELLIE MAE LAWRENCE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$24	WHITE	90
CAIRDEAS WINERY	2014	CINSAULT	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$34	RED	91
CAIRDEAS WINERY	2014	COUNOISE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$36	RED	90
CAIRDEAS WINERY	2014	CAISLEN AN PAPA MEEK VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$45	RED	91
CAIRDEAS WINERY	2014	TRI	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$39	RED	93
CAIRDEAS WINERY	2014	CONSONANCE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$42	RED	90

The **2016 Nellie Mae Lawrence Vineyard** is made from 60% Viognier and 40% Roussanne that was brought up all in stainless steel tanks. Its lighter gold color is followed by a steely, crisp, refreshing white that offers enjoyable notes of leafy herbs, green citrus, and tangerine peel. Exotic, dry and nicely balanced, it's going to be versatile and keep for a year or so. 250 cases.

A terrific expression of this variety, the **2014 Cinsault** (which includes 8% Counoise, 7% Grenache, and small amounts of Syrah and Mourvèdre) offers lots of beautiful cherry and strawberry fruits intermixed with notes of spice box, dried flowers, and Provençal herbs. It's pretty, medium-bodied, silky and polished, with tons of charm. This cuvée saw plenty of stems in the fermentation and 24 months in 30% new barrels. It's easily one of the finest expressions of this variety coming out of the New World.

Another outstanding example of a variety you don't see on its own very often, the 2014 Counoise offers more cherry notes, as well as lots of dried herbs, earth, and savory, leathery notes. Showing more black fruits with time in the glass, it's medium-bodied, elegant and pretty, with integrated acidity and a beautiful, elegant style that just begs to be drunk. This includes 10% Alicante Boushet and 5% Cinsault, and was brought up neutral barrels.

Another beautiful wine, the **2014 Caislen an Papa Meek Vineyard** checks in as 44% Grenache, 22% Mourvèdre, and the rest Syrah, Cinsault and Counoise, brought up in neutral barrels. It offers terrific black cherry and blackberry fruits as well as lots of spice, peppery herbs, and cedary notes. This medium-bodied, silky, elegant, impeccably made blend has tons of charm and is well worth checking out.

Deep ruby colored, the **2014 Tri** is a killer blend of 64% Syrah, 24% Mourvèdre, and 12% Grenache brought up in 30% new French oak puncheons. Black cherries, blackberries, peppery herbs, and hints of spice all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, supple, downright sexy blend that has no hard edges, sweet tannin, and a great finish. Count me impressed.

The **2014 Consonance** checks in as a blend of 48% Petite Sirah, 24% Syrah, 21% Counoise, and 7% Mourvèdre that was completely destemmed and aged just under two years in French oak. Its deep purple color is followed by lots of darker berry fruits, graphite, and scorched earth aromas and flavors. It's a big, rich, concentrated wine, yet like everything here, the tannin quality is impressive, as well as the purity of fruit. It should keep for at least 7-8 years. cairdeaswinery.com

CANVASBACK

CANVASBACK	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$40	RED	89
CANVASBACK	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON GRAND PASSAGE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$80	RED	95

The Canvasback releases are made by Brian Rudin and come all from the Red Mountain AVA. He's made one of the finest wines in the vintage with his 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Grand Passage.

The soft, rounded, sexy **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain** (81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot, 3% Malbec, and the rest Cabernet Franc) is a consumer-friendly, full-bodied, rounded, nicely made Cabernet that has plenty of mid-palate depth as well as sweet tannin. I'd happily drink bottles over the coming 7-8 years.

Coming from Red Mountain, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Grand Passage** is a much more serious effort. Crème de cassis, cedar pencil, spring flowers and high-class oak notes all emerge from this full-bodied, rich, gorgeously concentrated and pure Cabernet Sauvignon that has great tannin quality and seriously good balance. It's a fabulous example of Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon and I suspect the finest vintage I've tasted from this estate. www.canvasbackwine.com

CASASMITH

CASASMITH	2017	VINO SANGIOVESE ROSÉ	WASHINGTON	\$12	ROSÉ	90
CASASMITH	2016	VINO CABERNET / SANGIOVESE	WASHINGTON STATE	NA	RED	90
CASASMITH	2016	SANGIOVESE CINGHIALE ROSEBUD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	NA	RED	92
CASASMITH	2016	PRIMITIVO PORCOSPINO NORTHRIDGE VINEYARD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	NA	RED	92
CASASMITH	2016	BARBERA CERVO NORTHRIDGE VINEYARD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	NA	RED	90
CASASMITH	2016	BARBERA JACK'S VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	92

This is the Italian varietal focused label from Charles Smith.

The medium gold/salmon colored **2017 ViNO Sangiovese Rosé** offers a vibrant, strawberry and cherry-scented bouquet as well as a rounded, supple, nicely textured style. With both racy acidity and a fleshy, textured, salty style on the palate, it's a versatile rosé to drink over the coming 6-12 months.

A blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Sangiovese, the **2016 Vino Cabernet / Sangiovese** offers a deep ruby/plum color as well as spicy, peppery, perfumed notes of black cherries, blueberries incense, and exotic spices. Possessing much more intensity of flavor than you could want for the price tag, with medium to full-bodied richness and excellent purity, it's a no-brainer, high quality red to drink over the coming 3-4 years. It's a smoking value.

Deep ruby/purple-colored with a lovely nose of ripe cherries, crushed flowers, incense, and dried earth, the **2016 Sangiovese Cinghiale Rosebud** is medium-bodied, seamless, si ky and incredibly polished on the palate, with fine tannin and a creamy, layered texture that defies its 20 dollar price tag.

Another vibrant, deep ruby colored wine is the **2016 Primitivo Porcospino Northridge Vineyard**, which comes from the Northridge Vineyard on the Wahluke Slope. Black cherries, incense, brambly spice, and violet characteristics all emerge from this medium-bodied, creamy textured, seamless, gorgeously pure beauty that offers incredible pleasure and character.

Deep ruby/purple-colored, the **2016 Barbera Cervo Northridge Vineyard** is another knockout value. Blackberry, smoked meat, herbs, and earth nuances all give way to a full-bodied, concentrated, beautifully textured, silky effort that's already hard to resist.

From a site just off Sunnyside road (not far from Cayuse), the **2016 Barbera Jack's Vineyard** is another saturated ruby/plum-colored effort that offers plenty of Rocks style in its blackcurrants, olive, dried game, and pepper. Medium to full-bodied, elegant and seamless on the palate, with nicely integrated acidity and a fresh, focused, lively style, drink it over the coming 4-6 years. winesofsubstance.com

CAYUSE

CAYUSE	2016	VIIGNIER CAILLOUX VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	WHITE	94
CAYUSE	2015	ROSÉ	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	ROSÉ	89
CAYUSE	2015	GOD ONLY KNOWS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
CAYUSE	2015	THE LOVERS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
CAYUSE	2015	SYRAH ARMADA VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	96

CAYUSE	2016	GOD ONLY KNOWS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	92-95
CAYUSE	2016	FLYING PIG	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	93-95
CAYUSE	2016	THE LOVERS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-96
CAYUSE	2016	CAMASPELO	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97
CAYUSE	2016	WIDOWMAKER EN CHAMBERLIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-96
CAYUSE	2016	SYRAH CAILLOUX VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	97-99
CAYUSE	2016	SYRAH EN CERISE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-97
CAYUSE	2016	SYRAH EN CHAMBERLIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97
CAYUSE	2016	SYRAH BIONIC FROG	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	97-100
CAYUSE	2016	SYRAH ARMADA VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	96-99
CAYUSE	2016	SYRAH WALLAH WALLAH SPECIAL #10	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97+
CAYUSE	2016	IMPULSIVO	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	98-100

The unfortunate news at Cayuse this year was issues with the corks on their 2015 releases. For whatever reason, paraffin wax, which is used to coat the outside of corks, ended up being pushed into the bottle during bottling leaving particles as well as an oily residue in the wines. The only 2015s to be released were the Armada Syrah, God Only Knows, and The Lovers. This is heartbreaking, and I still remember tasting these fabulous wines from barrel. Hat's off to Christophe Baron and his team at Cayuse for discovering the problem, not releasing faulty wines, and refunding consumers' money. The 2015s that were bottled showed beautifully, and certainly, the 2016s are also terrific wines.

The **2016 Viognier Caillox Vineyard** from Baron reminds me of one of the single vineyard Condrieus from winemaker Andre Perret in France's Northern Rhône Valley. Killer notes of caramelized citrus, orange blossom, and salty minerality all flow to a ripe, medium to full-bodied, concentrated beauty that has good acidity, plenty of richness, yet a light, balanced character. Drink it over the coming 2-4 years.

Always incredibly light in color, the **2015 Rosé** is no exception and has tings of orange/salmon as well as racy notes of apple, citrus, and salty, mineral, seaside-like nuances. Exotic, medium-bodied, and lively on the palate, it's a quality rose to drink over the coming 6-12 months.

Coming from the Armada Vineyard and a field blend of primarily Grenache, the **2015 God Only Knows** is a singular beauty that could come from nowhere else. Its light ruby color is followed by a complex, nuanced bouquet of ripe cherries, sous bois, herbes de Provence, and charcoal/cold fireplace-like nuances. It blossoms with time in the glass, is medium-bodied, has integrated acidity, and fine tannin, and it just glides over the palate and is a joy to drink. It's going to be better with 2-3 years of bottle age and keep for a decade.

Made from 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Syrah, the **2015 The Lovers** was aged in roughly 40-50% new French oak 600-liter barrels. It gives up a terrific, classic bouquet of ripe black fruits, tobacco leaf, cold fireplace/ash, and spice as well as medium to full-bodied richness on the palate. It has light tannin, a seamless texture, and opens up beautifully with time in the glass. It can be drunk today or cellared for 10-15 years.

The only Syrah bottled in 2015 due to issues with corks, the **2015 Syrah Armada Vineyard** is a classic expression of this vineyard and gives up a rocking bouquet of ripe black cherries, peat moss, sous bois, tapenade and scorched earth. It's medium to full-bodied, silky and polished on the palate, with sweet tannin, impeccable balance, and great finish. Drink it anytime over the coming 10-15 years.

Always in the running for the best Grenache made in the United States, the **2016 God Only Knows** is another terrific example of the cuvée. Sporting a medium ruby color and complex notes of herbes de Provence, forest floor, decaying flowers, and assorted red and black fruits, it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, light, silky tannin, and a great finish. Again, it's the balance and seamlessness that sets this apart.

The Merlot-dominated cuvée is the **2016 Flying Pig**, another deep purple/ruby colored Bordeaux blend that's up-front, expressive, and showing beautifully. Plums, chocolate, charcoal, fireplace, and tobacco leaf notes all flow to a full-bodied, seamless, silky Merlot that has fine tannin and terrific purity of fruit. Like all of these 2016s from Christophe, it's beautifully balanced and has a forward, charming style that just begs to be drunk.

Always a blend of mostly Cabernet Sauvignon and smaller amounts of Syrah, the **2016 The Lovers** is already showy and expressive, with rocking notes of blackberries, peppery herbs, graphite, tobacco leaf, and underbrush. It's full-bodied, silky, and incredibly sexy on the palate, with a seamless texture, and like the Widowmaker, I suspect will hit the ground running and drink nicely in its youth.

The **2016 Camaspelo** is another Cabernet Sauvignon dominated blend that includes roughly 20% Merlot brought up in puncheons. Crème de cassis, cedarwood, Asian spices, and hints of dried tobacco all emerge from this beautiful, perfumed 2016. With full-bodied richness, ultra-fine tannin, integrated acidity, and a great finish, it's another beautifully balanced 2016 that will drink nicely in its youth yet also keep for two decades.

The **2016 Widowmaker En Chamberlin Vineyard** offers a ruby/plum color to go with a singular bouquet of lavender, crème de cassis, campfire, and truffle. It's medium to full-bodied, silky, and elegant on the palate, with a rounded, sexy texture and perfect balance. It shows slightly more sous bois and Rocks character than the 2015 did at this stage and I expect it will drink nicely right out of the gate.

Moving to the Syrahs and always the largest production release, the **2016 Syrah Caillox Vineyard** includes a small amount of co-fermented Viognier and is raised all in puncheons. Cold campfire/ash, plums, dried violets, and pepper all flow to a rich, full-bodied, incredibly opulent Syrah that has a stacked, thick mid-palate, bright acidity, and a great, great finish. It's another killer vintage for this vineyard and it's going to be one of the Syrahs of the vintage.

The **2016 Syrah En Cerise Vineyard** is another perfumed, complex Syrah. Black cherries, licorice, earth, charcoal, and roasted herb characteristics all flow to a rich, medium to full-bodied, concentrated 2016 that has bright yet integrated acidity, fine tannin, and a big finish. It's one of the fresher, juicier Syrahs in the lineup, yet packs plenty of fruit, and has a remarkable salinity on the finish.

The **2016 Syrah En Chamberlin Vineyard** offers more tertiary notes of smoked plums, iron, shiitake mushrooms, forest floor, and peppery herbs. It's concentrated, full-bodied, and balanced, with a big mid-palate, yet it glides across the palate with an almost Burgundian silkiness. This is a classic En Chamberlin that has all the Rocks funkiness and complexity, yet a beautiful elegance on the palate.

This is a great vintage for this cuvée and the **2016 Syrah Bionic Frog** is going to be up there with the finest vintages from the terroir. Crème de cassis, tobacco leaf, lead pencil, crushed rocks, and hints of soot flow to a perfectly balanced, full-bodied, powerful yet seamless Syrah that has integrated acidity, a graceful, weightless texture, and finish. This lengthy, opulent, beautifully complete Syrah will benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and knock your socks off over the following 10-15 years.

From a higher density planting just beside the estate, the **2016 Syrah Armada Vineyard** is unquestionably the most unevolved, backward, and tight of the Syrahs. Blackcurrants, plums, lavender, and ash all emerge from this full-bodied, powerful, classic, almost old-school Syrah that has high acidity, beautiful fruit, and a tight, closed, firm feel on the palate. It's going to require 2-3 years of bottle age and evolve like a great Côte Rôtie.

Only released in magnum, the **2016 Syrah Wallah Wallah Special #10** is always a mysterious blend of multiple vineyards. It has beautiful complexity in its ripe black cherry and cassis fruits, iodine, tobacco, ashtray, and earthy/peat moss-like aromas and flavors. This gives way to a full-bodied, concentrated Syrah that has bright acidity, loads of fruit, and a focused, juicy style that's going to benefit from short-term cellaring.

Arguably the finest cuvée made at the estate, and unquestionably the finest Tempranillo made outside of Spain, the **2016 Impulsivo** is another sensational 2016 from this team. Deep purple/opaque colored with a huge nose of crème de cassis, lavender, sandalwood, plums, and truffle, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, no hard edges, integrated acidity, and a forward, sexy, seamless profile. A wine that just glides across the palate, it carries remarkable intensity and length, with no sense of heaviness. It's capable of being drunk in its youth or cellaring for 15+. cayusevineyards.com

CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE

CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE	2015	COLD CREEK CHARDONNAY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$22	WHITE	91
CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE	2014	ARTIST SERIES RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$65	RED	94
CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE	2014	IMPETUS RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$125	RED	95
CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE	2015	CANOE RIDGE CABERNET SAUVIGNON	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$28	RED	90

Winemaker Bob Bertheau continues to more than over-deliver at Chateau Ste. Michelle and these latest releases are packed with quality and value.

The 2015 Cold Creek Chardonnay offers plenty of ripe Chardonnay fruit,

yet stays fresh, lively and crisp on the palate. Peach, buttered citrus and some floral notes all give way to a medium-bodied, balanced, clean Chardonnay that offers considerable value at the \$22 price point.

Saturated purple in color, the **2014 Artist Series Red Wine** boasts terrific notes of blackcurrants, spice box, white flowers, and hints of chocolate. Deep, rich, medium to full-bodied and concentrated, with sweet tannin, it's a beautiful wine from this estate that offers tons of charm and character. This cuvée is a blend of 72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 5% Malbec, and the balance Cabernet Franc that spent 24 months in 52% new French oak.

A more limited production cuvée is the **2014 Impetus Red Wine**, which is made from 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Syrah, and the rest Malbec aged all in new oak. Crème de cassis, crushed rock, spring flowers, and a touch of graphite all emerge from this pure, full-bodied effort that's still holding

things relatively close to its vest. Full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, deep, layered, and with ripe tannin, give bottles 2-4 years in the cellar and it will keep for 15-20 years.

Always a terrific value, the **2015 Canoe Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon** from the Horse Heaven Hills is a beauty, and readers looking for a quality Cabernet Sauvignon for drinking over the coming 7-8 years that won't break the bank should check this out. Currants, leafy herbs, tobacco, and spice characteristics all give way to a medium to full-bodied, pure, impeccably balanced effort that offers rock-solid bang for the buck. www.ste-michelle.com

CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE & DR. LOOSEN

CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE & DR. LOOSEN	2016 EROICA RIESLING	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$20	WHITE	92
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The **2016 Eroica Riesling** is another winner, and year in, year out, it's one of the finest expressions of this variety in the United States. It offers a clean, crisp bouquet of white peach, lychee, and candied orange. This gives

way to a medium-bodied, supple, beautifully pure, seamless Riesling that has remarkable purity and balance. It's terrific today, yet I suspect will age gracefully. www.ste-michelle.com

CO DINN CELLARS

CO DINN CELLARS	2015 CHARDONNAY FRENCH CREEK VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$45	WHITE	90
CO DINN CELLARS	2015 CHARDONNAY ROSKAMP VINEYARD	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$45	WHITE	91
CO DINN CELLARS	2014 SYRAH ROSKAMP VINEYARD BLOCK TWO	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$50	RED	90
CO DINN CELLARS	2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON PAINTED HILLS VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$50	RED	90
CO DINN CELLARS	2015 RED BLEND ELEPHANT MOUNTAIN VINEYARD	RATTLESNAKE HILLS	\$65	RED	90+
CO DINN CELLARS	2015 GSM RED BLEND LONESOME SPRING RANCH VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$45	RED	90

The **2015 Chardonnay French Creek Vineyard** is impressive. Orchard fruits, melon, honeysuckle and some white flower notes all emerge from more richly styled, buttery, yet fresh and pure Chardonnay. It's well worth drinking.

Coming from the Snipes Mountain AVA and brought up in 25% new French oak, the slightly deeper gold-colored **2015 Chardonnay Roskamp Vineyard** offers more brioche, honeysuckle, toasted nut, and stone fruit characteristics. It's impressive on the palate, with clean, pure fruit, good freshness, and a terrific finish. It's another thoroughly satisfying Chardonnay from this estate.

Made from 100% Syrah from the Snipes Mountain AVA, the **2014 Syrah Roskamp Vineyard Block Two** is deep purple colored and offers terrific notes of plums, blueberries, cedary spice, and charcoal. Rich, medium to full-bodied, nicely concentrated, and with integrated acidity, it's a seriously charming, balanced Syrah that has tons to love.

Spice, leafy herbs, menthol, plums, and blackcurrant notes all emerge from the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Painted Hills Vineyard**, which is 83% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petit Verdot, and the rest Ma bec that spent 20

months in 50% new oak. It's medium to full-bodied, has solid mid-palate density, and nicely integrated acidity. It's drinking nicely today yet will keep for a decade.

The **2015 Red Blend Elephant Mountain Vineyard** checks in as a blend of 58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Petit Verdot, 15% Merlot, and the rest Ma bec that saw 22 months in 59% new French oak. It's a lifted, concentrated, perfumed red offering lots of black and blue fruits, violets, incense, and spice. With medium to full-bodied richness, plenty of tannins, and a good finish, it's an outstanding effort that should benefit from a year or two in bottle and keep for a decade.

The supple, rounded, sweetly fruited **2015 GSM Red Blend Lonesome Spring Ranch Vineyard** (44% Syrah, 36% Grenache, and 20% Mourvèdre, brought up all in neutral oak) offers lots of candied cherry and black raspberry fruit, notes of spice, violets, and white pepper, good freshness, and a clean, balanced, enjoyable style. It's going to drink nicely for 5-7 years. www.codinncellars.com

COL SOLARE

COL SOLARE	2014 COMPONENT COLLECTION CABERNET SAUVIGNON	RED MOUNTAIN	\$85	RED	95
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All from their Red Mountain estate vineyards, the **2014 Component Collection Cabernet Sauvignon** is one of the new Component Collection releases and is all Clone 6 and Clone 10 Cabernet aged in new French oak. Saturated purple-colored with a beautiful purity in its crème de cassis, violets,

white chocolate, and graphite aromatics, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a lively, clean texture, integrated acidity and a great finish. I love the purity here, which builds with time in the glass. I'd give bottles another year or two and plan on drinking over the following 10-15. www.colsolare.com

COLUMBIA WINERY

COLUMBIA WINERY	2016 CHARDONNAY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$14	WHITE	86
COLUMBIA WINERY	2015 MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$16	RED	88
COLUMBIA WINERY	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$16	RED	87
COLUMBIA WINERY	2015 CABERNET FRANC	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$35	RED	90
COLUMBIA WINERY	2015 COLUMBIA WINERY VISION	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$42	RED	91
COLUMBIA WINERY	NV COLUMBIA WINERY RED BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$14	RED	86

Chamomile, lemon curd, and vanilla notes all emerge from the **2016 Chardonnay**. It's a charming, enjoyable, commercial styled effort to drink over the coming year.

Spice, cedary, leafy herbs and black fruits emerge from the **2015 Merlot**, a delicious, forward charmer to drink over the coming 3-5 years.

More graphite, violets, and incense notes emerge from the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon**, another charming, juicy, straight-up delicious wine that's made in huge quantities. It's balanced and ideal for mid-week drinking. This cuvée is 80% Cabernet, 8% Malbec, 5% Syrah, 3% Merlot, 2% Cab Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot, aged in French and American oak.

A much more limited production cuvée is the **2015 Cabernet Franc**, which is 95% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Syrah, aged 16 months in a mix of French and American oak. Deep ruby/purple-colored with attractive black

cherries, leafy underbrush, earth, and tobacco, it's medium to full-bodied, silky and pure on the palate, with a polished, elegant style. It's drinking nicely today yet should easily keep for 7-8 years.

Notes of plums, blackberries, scorched earth and pepper all emerge from the **2015 Columbia Winery Vision**, which is a blend of 69% Syrah, 21% Grenache, and 10% Mourvèdre, brought up in a mix of French, American, and Hungarian oak barrels, 42% being new. With medium to full-bodied richness, loads of fruit, and nicely integrated acidity, it's another terrific Syrah from this vintage.

A non-vintage blend of 40% Merlot, 39% Syrah, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Cabernet Franc, and 6% Ma bec, the **NV Columbia Winery Red Blend** offers a juicy berry-fruited, spicy bouquet as well medium-bodied depth and richness on the palate. It's forward, ready to go, and undeniably gulpable. www.columbiawinery.com

CONVERGENCE ZONE CELLARS

CONVERGENCE ZONE CELLARS	2015 PINOT GRIS DRIZZLE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$12	WHITE	84
CONVERGENCE ZONE CELLARS	2015 CHENIN BLANC SUNBREAK	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$12	WHITE	86
CONVERGENCE ZONE CELLARS	2013 MISTRAL	RED MOUNTAIN	\$31	RED	87

CONVERGENCE ZONE CELLARS	2014	STORM FRONT COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$28	RED	87
CONVERGENCE ZONE CELLARS	2015	FLY ROD CELLARS TRICO	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$28	RED	90

The **2015 Pinot Gris Drizzle** offers a semi-dry, apple-y, juicy, moderately charming profile best drunk up.

Better, the **2015 Chenin Blanc Sunbreak** has attractive peach and pineapple aromas and flavors in its medium-bodied, straightforward style. As with the Pinot Gris, it's 100% varietal brought up all in stainless steel.

Coming from a terrific terroir on Red Mountain, the **2013 Mistral** is a blend of 82% Grenache, 15% Syrah, and 3% Mourvèdre brought up in 17% new American oak. It offers a savory, spicy, forward style to go with lots of plum and cherry fruits, dried earth, and herbes de Provence. Drink it over the coming 3-4 years.

Deep ruby/purple-colored, the **2014 Storm Front Columbia Valley** is a

charming, straightforward effort offering classy notes of black raspberries, vanilla bean, and spice. With a mid-weight, balanced style on the palate, it should keep for 5-6 years. The blend is 37% Merlot, 35% Ma bec, and 28% Cabernet Franc, aged 30 months in a mix of French and American oak.

Made entirely from Cabernet Franc that was brought up all in new French oak, the **2015 Fly Rod Cellars Trico** from Convergence Zone Cellars is ruby/purple-colored and offers exotic, lifted aromatics of ripe strawberries, blueberries, candied orange peel, and incense. Medium to full-bodied, silky and pure on the palate, with fine tannin, it's a singular expression of Cabernet Franc that should keep for 7-8 years. www.czcellars.com

CORLISS

CORLISS	2014	SYRAH COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$75	RED	94
CORLISS	2014	RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$75	RED	95
CORLISS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$95	RED	96

The **2014 Syrah Columbia Valley** from Corliss is a blend of Syrah that was co-fermented with a tiny amount of Viognier. Deep, inky-colored with a huge nose of blackcurrants, charcoal, chocolate, and graphite, this puppy hits the palate with a full-bodied, unctuous, powerful style that stays nicely balanced and pure. It's a big, rich, modern styled effort that has tons to love. Drink it anytime over the coming decade.

The **2014 Red Wine** checks in as a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot that spent 28 months in new and used French oak. Sporting the normal inky color (these Corliss releases are always inky colored) and classic notes of blackcurrants, chocolate, mulled spices, and espresso, it hits the palate with a full-bodied, elegant,

beautifully balanced style. Layered, pure, with nicely integrated acidity and ripe yet present tannin, it's very much in the style of this estate and will keep for 15+ years.

Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged 28 months in French oak, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley** is slightly more expensive than the Red Wine blend but certainly delivers. It too is saturated purple in color and offers awesome notes of crème de cassis, graphite, wet stone, and chocolate. With perfectly integrated oak, a rich, full-bodied mouthfeel, and high yet ripe, tannin, it's a blockbuster Cabernet Sauvignon that's going to benefit from 3-4 years of bottle age and keep for two decades. www.corliss.wine

CÔTE BONNEVILLE

CÔTE BONNEVILLE	2015	CHARDONNAY DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$50	WHITE	93
CÔTE BONNEVILLE	2013	CABERNET SAUVIGNON DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$120	RED	96
CÔTE BONNEVILLE	2014	CARRIAGE HOUSE DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$50	RED	91
CÔTE BONNEVILLE	2015	SYRAH DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$65	RED	93

Winemaker Kerry Shiels makes a rich, age-worthy style of Chardonnay and her **2015 Chardonnay DuBrul Vineyard** is no exception. Medium gold-colored with notes of baked apples, brioche, caramelized citrus, and spice, it's rich, full-bodied and concentrated, with plenty of texture that's balanced by solid acidity. It's capable of lasting for a decade or more.

The top wine of the estate and a blend of 58% Cabernet Sauvignon and 42% Merlot aged two years in 76% new French oak, the **2013 Cabernet Sauvignon DuBrul Vineyard** comes from the estate vineyard located on the northern edge of the Yakima Valley. Deep purple-colored with a beautiful nose of blackcurrants, blueberries, candied violets, and sandalwood, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, an elegant texture,

and rockingly polished tannin. It's a seriously beautiful wine!

Leafy herbs, dried earth, cassis, and black cherry notes all emerge from the **2014 Carriage House DuBrul Vineyard**, which is 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, and 13% Cabernet Franc aged in 55% new French oak. Possessing medium to full-bodied richness, a light, elegant texture, and fine tannin, it's already terrific, yet I suspect will cruise on its balance.

I always love the Syrah from Shiels and the **2015 Syrah DuBrul Vineyard** is no exception. Black cherries, black raspberries, toasty oak, and spicy herb notes give way to a medium to full-bodied, seamless, elegant Syrah that still packs ample fruit. www.cotebonneville.com

DAMSEL CELLARS

DAMSEL CELLARS	2013	CABERNET SAUVIGNON COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$38	RED	92
DAMSEL CELLARS	2014	SYRAH COLUMBIA VALLEY	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$28	RED	89
DAMSEL CELLARS	2015	COLUMBIA VALLEY RED BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$18	RED	88
DAMSEL CELLARS	2015	BOUSHEY VINEYARD THE FATES	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$36	RED	91

Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged 22 months in 65% new French oak, the **2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley** has a beautiful, Bordeaux-like bouquet of blackcurrants, plums, tobacco, and cedar. Deep, full-bodied, and incredibly polished, it has fine tannin and a great finish. It's going to drink nicely for a decade or more.

Peppery herbs, blackcurrants, blackberries, chocolate, and some gravelly minerality all emerge from the **2014 Syrah Columbia Valley**. With a medium-bodied, supple, charming, slightly Old World feel, good acidity, and fine tannin, it's another high-quality wine from this estate.

The ripe, seductive, forward **2015 Columbia Valley Red Blend** (75% Merlot, 10% Cab Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Syrah) offers loads of upfront blue and red fruits, spice, and hints of dried herbs/cedar in a medium to full-bodied, easy drinking style.

A blend of 38% Grenache, 38% Mourvèdre, and 24% Syrah, the **2015 Boushey Vineyard The Fates** offers loads of Old World notes of pepper, cured meats, tobacco, and lavender. With a Rocks-I ke style in its broad, expansive texture, no hard edges, and a great finish, it's a beautiful red blend I'd happily drink over the coming 5-7 years. www.damselcellars.com

DELILLE CELLARS

DELILLE CELLARS	2016	CHALEUR BLANC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	92
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	ROUSSANNE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$37	WHITE	91
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	METIER	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$46	RED	91-93
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	SIGNATURE SYRAH	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$44	RED	91
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	SYRAH GRAND CIEL VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	\$68	RED	93+
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	DOYENNE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$39	RED	91
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	D2	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	RED	91
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	MERLOT	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$49	RED	90
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	MALBEC RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$49	RED	94

DELILLE CELLARS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON LOT 3	RED MOUNTAIN	\$0	RED	95
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON FOUR FLAGS	RED MOUNTAIN	\$68	RED	94
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	CHALEUR ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$80	RED	94
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	HARRISON HILL	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$90	RED	96
DELILLE CELLARS	2015	CABERNET GRAND CIEL VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	\$160	RED	96
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	GRENACHE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	90-92
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	METIER	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	91-93
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	SIGNATURE SYRAH	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	91-93
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	SYRAH GRAND CIEL VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	93-96
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON DISCOVERY	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	93-95+
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	QUINTESSENCE MALBEC / CABERNET SAUVIGNON	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	92-94
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	FOUR FLAGS	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	93-96
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	CHALEUR ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94-96
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON KLIPSUN VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94-97+
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	CABERNET GRAND CIEL VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	95-97
DELILLE CELLARS	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HARRISON HILL	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	93-95

Owner/Winemaker Chris Upchurch compared the 2015s from Washington State to the 2009s from Bordeaux, and given the sweltering heat in 2015, I understand the comparison. However, the 2015s come across as more focused and classic in style, in part, I suspect to the vines shutting down throughout the summer and I think the true phenolics actually lag the 2012s, 2014s, and 2016s. These wines are concentrated, have notable purity, and building tannin. They're going to benefit from short-term cellaring. As usual, I tasted the barrel samples during my visit at the estate and the bottled wines at my office in Colorado.

Looking first at the whites, the **2016 Chaleur Blanc** is 85% Semillon and 15% Sauvignon Blanc, and this cuvée is unquestionably one of the top Bordeaux white blends coming out of the United States. Pineapple, tart peach, honeysuckle, and white flower characteristics all emerge from the glass. It has beautiful purity and sweetness of fruit, good acidity, and a clean, dry finish. Drink it anytime over the coming 4-5 years (or longer if you're so inclined).

The vibrant gold colored **2016 Roussanne** (100% Roussanne aged 85% in stainless steel and 15% in neutral barrels) is another beauty, offering notes of crisp apple, white flowers, and salty minerality in a medium-bodied, pure, dry, beautifully balanced package. It's going to shine on the dinner table.

Checking in as a blend of 38% each of Grenache and Mourvèdre, with balance mostly Syrah (there's tiny amount of Cinsault), the **2015 Metier** sports a ruby, semi-opaque color as well as Southern Rhône like notes of blackberries, peppery herbs, licorice, and earth. It's medium-bodied, rounded, and textured, with loads of charm. Drink it anytime over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2015 Signature Syrah** (which includes 2%) comes from Ciel du Cheval, Grand Ciel, and Boushey Vineyards and was completely destemmed and aged in 20% new French oak. It's another Rhône look alike and offers classic notes of blackberries, black olives, bacon fat, and peppery herbs. It's medium-bodied, fresh, nicely concentrated, and balanced, with present, yet ripe, tannin. It will keep for a decade.

The flagship Syrah is the **2015 Syrah Grand Ciel Vineyard** and it's all from a single vineyard on Red Mountain, was completely destemmed, and aged in 30% new French oak. Similarly colored to the Signature Syrah, it offers more black cherry, currants, scorched earth, smoke, and mineral characteristics to go with a big, rich, concentrated style on the palate. Beautifully balanced, with both tannin and acidity, it needs 2-3 years of bottle age and will shine over the following decade.

Made from 60% Syrah and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2015 Doyenne** (100% Red Mountain) offers fabulous purity and depth of fruit as well as a rich, balanced, layered and medium to full-bodied style on the palate. With loads of blackberry, bay leaf, underbrush, and hints of tobacco, it has good acidity and freshness, plenty of fruit, and I suspect will keep for a decade.

The largest production Bordeaux blend from this estate is their D2 release, which is named after the famed highway leading up to the Médoc from the city of Bordeaux. The **2015 D2** is 58% Merlot, 36% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. It offers a Pomerol-like bouquet of black cherries, leafy herbs, graphite, and lead pencil, and is medium to full-bodied, seamless and elegant. Readers wanting a taste of the style – and quality – from Delille should absolutely check this wine out. Drink bottles over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2015 Merlot** is outstanding, with a concentrated, rich style and classic notes of black cherries, dark chocolate, scorched earth, and tobacco. It's deep, medium to full-bodied, has beautiful fruit, and a great finish. It's certainly approachable today but will be even better with a year in bottle and keep for a decade.

The **2015 Malbec Red Willow Vineyard** is one of the finest Malbec coming from the state. Offering up a huge nose of blueberries, blackberries, crushed flowers, toasty oak, and Asian spices, this beauty is full-bodied, has a seductive, ripe, layered texture, sweet tannin, and a great finish. It's a rocking good wine to enjoy over the coming 5-7 years.

A one-time offering meant for the wine club, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon**

Lot 3 is 100% Cabernet from the Klipsun Vineyard on Red Mountain. It offers a fabulous perfume of black raspberries, blackberries, toasty oak, incense, and flowers, with more sweet spice developing with time in the glass, it's a ripe, sexy Cabernet that has a great mid-palate, a rounded, seductive texture, and sweet tannin. It's already drinking brilliantly but will keep for 10-15 years.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Four Flags** comes from the top four vineyards in any vintage and in 2015 is 30% Grand Ciel, 30% Upchurch, 25% Ciel du Cheval, and the rest from Klipsun. It's a rich, powerful wine that offers boatloads of ripe black cherries, crushed violets, incense, and Asian spice aromatics. Rich, full-bodied, supple, and impressively concentrated, it shows the ripe yet focused/elegant style of the vintage.

While I always think of the Harrison Hill release as the Margaux in the lineup, the Chaleur is much more Pauillac/Saint Julien in style. The **2015 Chaleur Estate** checks in as 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, and 10% Cabernet Franc. It's a full-bodied, deep, concentrated effort that offers terrific cassis and black cherry fruits, graphite, scorched earth, licorice, and crushed rock-like minerality. Like all the 2015s from Delille, it has an elegant, pure, focused style and is beautifully balanced.

I always find a subtle Château Margaux-like quality in this cuvée and the **2015 Harrison Hill** is no exception. Beautiful notes of sandalwood, sweet cassis, blueberries, forest floor, and graphite are just some of the nuances here. Hitting the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, it has sweet, elegant tannins, beautiful balance, and a terrific sweetness of fruit that keeps you coming back to the glass. It needs a healthy decant if drinking anytime soon and will be even better with 3-4 years of bottle age, at which point it will drink nicely for two decades or more. The blend of the 2015 is 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, and 10% Cabernet Franc, aged all in New French barrels.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Grand Ciel Vineyard** is a brilliant wine that has both power and elegance. Crème de cassis, black cherries, scorched earth, cedar pencil shavings, and a beautiful floral (violets?) character all flow to a seamless, medium to full-bodied Cabernet that has fine tannin, impeccable balance, and a great finish. It shows the warmth yet also the classic style of this great vintage for Washington State. It will ideally be given 2-4 years of bottle age and is capable of lasting for two decades.

Leading off the 2016s from barrel, the **2016 Grenache** has outstanding potential and is certainly a terrific Grenache that's up with the best examples of this variety coming out of Washington. Terrific sweet raspberry and blackberry fruit, herbes de Provence, and peppery notes all give way to ripe, polished, undeniably sexy Grenache that's going to drink nicely right out of the gate.

The **2016 Metier** checks in as a rough blend of 40/40/20 Grenache, Mourvèdre, and Syrah, with a splash of Cinsault. It offers loads of blackberry and raspberry fruits, plenty of meatiness, and peppery herbs, full-bodied richness, and a pleasure-bent, sexy style.

The **2016 Signature Syrah** is always a good value as well as a great example of Washington State Syrah. Blackberries, smoked herbs, earth, and hints of lavender all emerge from this medium-bodied, rich, balanced, beautiful Syrah that has loads of charm.

Inky colored, the **2016 Syrah Grand Ciel Vineyard** offers a great nose of plum, spice, lavender, and exotic flowers. Ripe, full-bodied, and sexy, with sweet tannin, it's an elegant yet rich beauty that's going to keep for a decade or more.

Moving to the Bordeaux blends and screaming Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Discovery** (100% varietal) offers a classic, beautiful nose of blue fruits, violets, lavender, and bay leaf. It's full-bodied, textured and deep, with a big finish, it could end up being a true superstar bottle of wine.

Coming from a single block and a blend of 72% Malbec and 28% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2016 Quintessence Malbec / Cabernet Sauvignon** is deep, inky-colored, as are the majority of these 2016 barrel samples. Blueberries, cassis, graphite, hints of toasty oak, and dried flowers all emerge from this rich,

medium to full-bodied, concentrated Ma bec that packs serious amounts of fruit and character.

All Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2016 Four Flags** offers lots of ripe red and black fruits, spice, lead pencil and cedar notes, full-bodied richness, beautiful purity and a layered, rich, balanced style. This cuvée gains weight in bottle and is, year in, year out, one of the best Bordeaux blends from this estate.

The flagship **2016 Chaleur Estate** is a great example of this cuvée and shows the quality of the vintage. Black currants, plum, spice, and sandalwood notes all emerge from this beautiful, full-bodied, ripe, sexy Cabernet Sauvignon that has a deep, concentrated mid-palate and sweet tannin. A blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc and the rest Petit Verdot, it's going to benefit from short-term cellaring and keep for two decades.

The **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Klipsun Vineyard** is also spectacular and

might end up being the top Cabernet in the lineup. Blackcurrants, graphite, violets, and damp earth aromas and flavors all emerge from this full-bodied, pure, mineral-laced 2016 that has the forward, sexy style of the vintage as well as plenty of underlying structure and depth.

Deep purple-colored, the 100% Cabernet Sauvignon **2016 Cabernet Grand Ciel Vineyard** saw an extended maceration and is aged all in new barrels. Black raspberries, cassis, toasted spice, and espresso roast notes all emerge from this ripe, full-bodied, decadent 2016 that certainly packs a punch. It has tons of fruit, building structure, and terrific purity, as well as classic Red Mountain character.

I love the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Harrison Hill**, another Margaux like effort offering lovely currants and cassis fruits, lots of spring flowers, cedar and sandalwood aromas and flavors. There are some bell pepper notes, but it's complex, has sweet tannin, and a beautiful finish. It's Old World, has an herbal edge, but will be rock solid. www.delillecellars.com

DELMAS

DELMAS	2015 SYRAH SJR VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$65	RED	96
Made from 91% Syrah and 9% Viognier, aged in 60% new wood, the 2015 Syrah SJR Vineyard is sensational stuff that delivers everything you could want from a Rock Syrah. Blackcurrants, tobacco, tapenade, and loads of		peppery, meaty goodness all give way to a ripe, hedonistic, expansive beauty that has sweet tannin and an awesome texture. It will shine for a decade or more. www.delmaswines.com			

DEN HOED

DEN HOED	2016 CHRISTINA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	WHITE	92
DEN HOED	2014 MARIE'S VIEW	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$80	RED	86
DEN HOED	2014 ANDREAS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$80	RED	92

The **2016 Christina** comes all from the Kenny Hill estate vineyard in Walla Walla and spent 7 months in once-used French oak. It sports a vibrant gold color as well as a spicy, toasty, dried herbs and classic citrus and lemon-scented bouquet. Fresh, vibrant and lively on the palate, with terrific purity of fruit and well-integrated acidity, drink this high-quality Chardonnay anytime over the coming 6-7 years.

The **2014 Marie's View** is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon that spent two years in equal parts new and once-used barrels. It offers an ultra-ripe,

perfumed bouquet of violets, plum, blackberry, and spice, and comes across as full-bodied, sweet, and a touch evolved on the palate. It's a big, sweet, fruit bomb but should be much more at this price point. Tasted twice.

The **2014 Andreas** is noticeably better than the Marie's View, with less obvious sweetness and excellent purity. Currants, cassis, vanilla bean and chocolate notes all emerge from this rich, full-bodied effort that has ripe tannin and rock-solid balance. It should drink nicely for a decade. denhoedwines.com

DESCENDANT CELLARS

DESCENDANT CELLARS	2013 GRENACHE COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	RED	86
DESCENDANT CELLARS	2013 BELLE GSM	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$33	RED	87
DESCENDANT CELLARS	2014 SYRAH LES COLLINES VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$33	RED	89
DESCENDANT CELLARS	2014 MOURVÈDRE YAKIMA VALLEY	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$33	RED	88

The light ruby-colored **2013 Grenache Columbia Valley** (there's 8% Syrah in the blend) offers Pinot Noir-like notes of cherries and dried herbs. It's medium-bodied, supple, straightforward, and enjoyable, and best drunk up.

The **2013 Belle GSM** is made from 58% Grenache, 26% Syrah, and 16% Mourvèdre brought up in neutral oak. Its slight deeper ruby color is followed by similar black cherry and red currant fruits and it has a solid, spicy, savory style on the palate. With medium-bodied richness, savory tannin, and a lovely textured, it's a charming, certainly enjoyable effort to drink over the coming 4-6 years.

The **2014 Syrah Les Collines Vineyard** comes from a terrific terroir located just southeast of the town of Walla Walla. Black cherries, violets, earthy minerality, graphite and hints of plums all emerge from this medium-bodied, ripe, fruit-forward, charming effort. It has plenty to like and should keep for 4-6 years.

The **2014 Mourvèdre Yakima Valley** is an enjoyable, classy expression of this variety. Black cherries, blueberries, and strawberry notes, as well as plenty of peppery spice and herbs, give way to a medium-bodied, juicy, enjoyable Mourvèdre to drink over the coming 4-5 years. www.descendantcellars.com

DOUBLEBACK

DOUBLEBACK	2016 CHARDONNAY	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	WHITE	89
DOUBLEBACK	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$97	RED	94+
DOUBLEBACK	2015 ESTATE RESERVE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$145	RED	96
DOUBLEBACK	2016 STOLEN HORSE SYRAH	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$64	RED	92

The **2016 Chardonnay** from winemaker Josh McDaniels comes all from the Kenny Hill Vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley. Aged in 35% new French oak (15% was brought up in concrete), it offers a ripe, tropical bouquet of white peach, citrus blossom, honeysuckle, and hints of pineapple. With a medium-bodied, supple, rounded texture, good acidity, and excellent purity of fruit, it's going to drink nicely for a couple of years.

The straight **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon** (there's 2% Ma bec in the blend) comes from Walla Walla Valley and was brought up in 85% new French oak. This opaque purple-colored beauty offers terrific black currant and cassis-like fruit intermixed with classic tobacco leaf, damp earth, and crushed flower aromas and flavors. Rich, full-bodied, and elegant, with a seamless texture that carries plenty of sweet tannins, give bottles 2-4 years in the cellar and it's going to keep for another 15-20 years. It's a beautiful, impeccably made wine.

There are under 100 cases of the **2015 Estate Reserve**, 100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged in 95% new French oak. Similarly inky colored with killer notes of blackcurrants, espresso roast, chocolate, gravelly minerality and hints of leafy herbs, this beauty hits the palate with a full-bodied, powerful, layered style that's already hard to resist. Possessing brilliant purity of fruit, building tannin, and a big finish, it's a power-packed beauty from this team that's going to have 20-25 years of overall longevity.

The inky colored **2016 Stolen Horse Syrah** (93% Syrah and 7% Viognier) offers a slightly reserved, backward feel, yet certainly has gorgeous fruit. Black raspberries, cassis, and hints of graphite flow to a full-bodied, rich, sexy Syrah that has bright acidity and fine, integrated tannin. It should come together with 2-3 years of bottle age and keep for over a decade. This cuvée was brought up in 33% new French oak, 40% in concrete tanks, and the rest in neutral oak. www.doubleback.com

DOWSETT FAMILY WINERY

DOWSETT FAMILY WINERY	2016 GEWURZTRAMINER	COLUMBIA GORGE	\$14	WHITE	87
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The **2016 Gewurztraminer** from Chis Dowsett (who also makes the wines for Buty) offers a crazy perfume of exotic, tropical fruits, chamomile, and green citrus. Medium-bodied, clean, and balanced on the

palate, it's always a singular wine, but this vintage has a good amount of texture and it should be versatile with something like a cheese course. www.dowsettwinery.com

DUNHAM CELLARS

DUNHAM CELLARS	2016	LATE HARVEST RIESLING	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$38	WHITE	90
DUNHAM CELLARS	2016	CHARDONNAY SHIRLEY MAYS	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	89
DUNHAM CELLARS	2014	SYRAH COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	93
DUNHAM CELLARS	2014	SYRAH LEWIS VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$75	RED	94
DUNHAM CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON XX	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	RED	92
DUNHAM CELLARS	2015	TRUTINA	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$29	RED	93

Walla Walla based Dunham Cellars has turned out a bevy of terrific wines. This report focuses mostly on the 2014s as I was only able to taste one of their 2015s. Nevertheless, both vintages are rock-solid and these are impressive wines that shine for their purity and balance, as well as depth of fruit.

The medium amber-colored **2016 Late Harvest Riesling** (100% Riesling) offers a ripe, honeyed, caramelized style in its buttered orange peel, apricot, and honey aromas and flavors. Thick, unctuous and decadent, it has moderate acidity, lots of sweetness, and a big finish. It needs a touch more acidity to play with the big boys but is a ripe, pure, impressive dessert wine to enjoy over the coming 4-6 years.

The medium gold colored **2016 Chardonnay Shirley Mays** gives up lots of buttered citrus and leafy green herb notes in its medium-bodied, clean, balanced style. It has solid texture as well as integrated acidity.

The deep purple/black colored **2014 Syrah Columbia Valley** is a ripe, concentrated, modern-styled beauty that has fabulous purity in its black raspberry and cassis fruit, licorice, classy oak, and graphite. Deep, rich, pure and layered on the palate, with fine tannin, it's a seriously sexy Syrah that will keep for a decade.

A big step up in price, the **2014 Syrah Lewis Vineyard** is 100% Syrah all

from a single vineyard in the Columbia Valley. It was brought up in new French oak puncheons. Similarly purple/ruby colored with a killer nose of blackcurrants, blackberries, forest floor, peppery herbs, and earth, this beauty is full-bodied, concentrated, and impeccably balanced. I'm not sure it's worth twice the price of the Columbia Valley effort, but it's certainly a gorgeous wine.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon XX** checks in as 100% Cabernet and was brought up in a mix of new French and American oak barrels. Its deep purple color is followed by a beautiful bouquet of crème de cassis, baking spice, vanilla bean and white chocolate. Medium to full-bodied, elegant, and si ky on the palate, with impressive purity and integrated acidity, drink it anytime over the coming 10-15 years.

The **2015 Trutina** from Dunham is a blend of 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, 10% Ma bec, and the rest Cabernet Franc. It's another beautiful wine from this estate that over-delivers. Gorgeous crème de cassis, black raspberry, vanilla bean, and Asian spice notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, seamless, elegant beauty that has real class. While it's not a blockbuster, it just glides across the palate, has notable purity of fruit, and a great finish, all making it a terrific value, even at the roughly \$30 price point. www.dunhamcellars.com

DUSTED VALLEY

DUSTED VALLEY	2016	CHARDONNAY OLSEN VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$36	WHITE	89
DUSTED VALLEY	2014	CULT OF CERES MESSOR DIONYSUS VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$133	RED	91+
DUSTED VALLEY	2015	BFM DIONYSUS VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$53	RED	89
DUSTED VALLEY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON V.R. SPECIAL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	92
DUSTED VALLEY	2015	SYRAH TALL TALES STONEY VINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93
DUSTED VALLEY	2015	PETITE SIRAH STONE TREE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$42	RED	89

The **2016 Chardonnay Olsen Vineyard** from Dusted Valley offers a medium-gold color as well as classic notes of pineapple and orchard fruits, bright acidity, and a clean, classy balanced style.

Coming all from a site in the Columbia Valley and a blend of 91% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot, and 3% Merlot, the **2014 Cult of Ceres Messor Dionysus Vineyard** was raised in 69% new French oak. Plums, blackberries, leafy herbs/tobacco and some obvious oak all emerge from the glass. It's full-bodied, rich, nicely concentrated, and angular on the palate, with present, ripe tannin. Give it a year or three and it should keep for 10-15.

The Merlot-dominated cuvée from Dusted Valley is the **2015 BFM Dionysus Vineyard**, 79% Merlot, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 4% Petit Verdot that was brought up in just under 40% new French oak. It offers a ripe, herbal, chocolatey style as well as medium to full-bodied richness and depth on the palate, with some chewy, dry tannin. It lacks a touch of charm, yet still carries plenty of fruit.

The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon V.R. Special is Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated yet includes a splash of Petit Verdot. Brought up in 40% new French oak, it offers a deep purple/ruby color to go with classic Cabernet Sauvignon notes of blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, damp herbs, and Asian spice. It's beautifully balanced, full-bodied, and pure, and it going to keep for 10-15 years.

Made from 100% Syrah raised all in second fill 500-liter puncheons, the **2015 Syrah Tall Tales Stoney Vine Vineyard** offers terrific notes of blackcurrants, plums, smoke tobacco, and peppery herbs. This meaty, medium to full-bodied, ripe Syrah has a mouthfilling texture, a plump mid-palate, and sweet tannin, all making for a classic Walla Walla Syrah that will keep for a decade.

The inky colored **2015 Petite Sirah Stone Tree** is a firm, rich, concentrated, and structured 2015. Blueberries, scorched earth, and a touch of violet-like character all emerge from this dense, backward effort that manages to stay relatively elegant and light on the palate, with nicely integrated acidity. It's a steakhouse wine for sure. www.dustedvalley.com

EIGHT BELLS

EIGHT BELLS	2016	CHARDONNAY BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	89
EIGHT BELLS	2014	SANGIOVESE RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$25	RED	89
EIGHT BELLS	2013	DAVID'S BLOCK RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$35	RED	90
EIGHT BELLS	2014	RED WILLOW VINEYARD OLD SALT	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$28	RED	90
EIGHT BELLS	2015	SYRAH 8 CLONES RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$35	RED	91

The **2016 Chardonnay Boushey Vineyard** from Eight Bells comes all from a great site on the western, cooler side of the Yakima Valley. Melon, poached pear, brioche and floral notes all emerge from this medium-bodied, rich, nicely textured and balanced Chardonnay that has plenty to love.

From another great site in the Yakima Valley, the **2014 Sangiovese Red Willow Vineyard** (100% Sangiovese brought up in neutral barrels) is a pretty cherry, floral, and underbrush scented effort that has a juicy, medium-bodied, elegant style. It's ideal for drinking over the coming 3-4 years.

The **2013 David's Block Red Willow Vineyard** comes from one of the great vineyards in the state and is 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Ma bec, and the rest Cabernet Franc, Carmenère, Merlot and Petit Verdot. It offers a deep purple/ruby-tinged color as well as lots of spice and cedar notes intermixed with candied violets, ripe black cherry, and incense aromas and

flavors. With medium-bodied richness, fine tannin, and a lifted, perfumed style, drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

A blend of 68% Sangiovese, 28% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 4% Cabernet Franc, the **2014 Red Willow Vineyard Old Salt** spent 20 months in neutral barrels. Its medium ruby/purple color is followed by a pretty, elegant, seamless red that offers a subtle herbal style in its black cherry, leather, and graphite-laced aromas and flavors. I love its purity of fruit, and it's a joy to drink.

A blend of 94% Syrah, 4% Viognier, and 2% Grenache, the **2015 Syrah 8 Clones Red Willow Vineyard** was brought up in 500-liter puncheons (50% new) for 18 months. Ripe plums, blueberries, cherries, cedary spice, and sappy flower notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, elegant Syrah. It has a rounded, friendly texture, integrated acidity, and the balance to keep for 7-8 years. eightbellswinery.com

FIDELITAS

FIDELITAS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$75	RED	94
FIDELITAS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON QUINTESSENCE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$65	RED	94
FIDELITAS	2015	OPTU RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$55	RED	93

FIDELITAS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$50	RED	92
FIDELITAS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON CIEL DU CHEVAL	RED MOUNTAIN	\$70	RED	94
FIDELITAS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON BLACKWOOD CANYON	RED MOUNTAIN	\$65	RED	94

Charlie Hoppes continues to knock it out of the park with his Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignons and Bordeaux blends. These are ripe, sexy, yet balanced wines that are always a joy to drink.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate** from Fidelitas, one of the flagship releases from the estate, spent 22 months in 71% new French oak. Its deep, inky purple/ruby color is followed by an impressive bouquet of ripe plums, black cherries, tobacco, and leafy herbs. Picking up more chocolate and graphite characteristics with time in the glass, this full-bodied, rich, nicely concentrated effort has fine tannin, good purity of fruit, and nicely integrated acidity.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Quintessence** (100% Cabernet aged in 83% new French oak) offers more tobacco, spring flower, and violets characteristics, as well as a full-bodied, pure, balanced style on the palate. With lots of blue fruits, ripe tannin, and terrific purity, it's going to keep for 10-15 years. It's another high-quality, balanced wine from this estate.

The **2015 Optu Red Mountain** is a blend of 72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot, and 4% Cabernet Franc. It's another inky-colored effort that gives up plenty of graphite, tobacco, and black cherry/currants styled fruits. It has lots of Cabernet Sauvignon character, the savory tannin of the Red Mountain terroir, and a great finish.

The classic **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain** (100% Cabernet aged 22 months in 80% new French oak) offers pure, elegant notes of crème de cassis, crushed flowers, and violets, with a medium to full-bodied, si ky, nuanced style on the palate. Less powerful and tannic than some of the other cuvées here, it still has beautiful purity and well-integrated acidity, and is a beautiful wine that's going to drink well for 10-15 years.

From one of my favorite vineyards on Red Mountain, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Ciel du Cheval** spent 22 months in 29% new French oak. Black cherry, blueberries, violets, spring flowers, and lavender notes all emerge from the glass and it has a rich, rounded, voluptuous style on the palate. Nicely balanced, with sweet tannin, it's another rocking wine from Fidelitas to enjoy over the coming 10-15 years.

Another 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from this estate, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Blackwood Canyon** (22 months in 71% new French oak) offers a plumper, more sweetly fruited, sexy style. Blackcurrants, blueberries, scorched earth and Asian spice notes all give way to a full-bodied, plump, rounded, yet still structured effort that has considerable depth and richness, all while not being heavy. It too will keep for 10-15 years. While I found all these 2015s to be outstanding wines, they're certainly more similar than different. fidelitaswines.com

FIELDING HILLS WINERY

FIELDING HILLS WINERY	2014	SYRAH RIVERBEND VINEYARD ESTATE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$42	RED	91
FIELDING HILLS WINERY	2014	RIVERBEND VINEYARD ESTATE TRIBUTE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$38	RED	90
FIELDING HILLS WINERY	2014	MERLOT RIVERBEND VINEYARD ESTATE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$38	RED	89
FIELDING HILLS WINERY	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RIVERBEND VINEYARD ESTATE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$46	RED	91

The **2014 Syrah Riverbend Vineyard Estate** checks in as a blend of 96% Syrah, 2% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 2% Merlot aged 19 months in a mix of 70% new French and American oak. Ruby/purple-colored with lots of meaty black fruits, chocolate, and toasty oak, it's medium to full-bodied, nicely concentrated, rich and beautifully textured, with impressive fruit. There are enough tannin and acidity here to keep it drinking nicely for 7-8 years.

The **2014 Riverbend Vineyard Estate Tribute** checks in as a blend of 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Syrah, 26% Merlot, and 13% Cabernet Franc, brought up in a mix of American and French oak. With a deep purple/ruby color and notes of black cherries, black raspberries, cedarwood, spice, and vanilla bean, it's medium to full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, and

luxuriously textured. It's a sweetly fruited, ripe, charming effort to drink over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2014 Merlot Riverbend Vineyard Estate** (90% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 4% Syrah) is made from the same cloth, yielding loads of black cherry and currant fruits, a rich, mouthfilling, full-bodied texture, sweet tannin, and plenty of spicy oak. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Riverbend Vineyard Estate** (86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Syrah, 4% Merlot, and 2% Cabernet Franc) offers more purity, freshness, and focus, as well as loads of black fruits, toasty oak, charcoal, and espresso aromas and flavors. Classy, balanced, and elegant, with both tannin and acidity, it's going to drink nicely for 10-15 years. www.fieldinghills.com

FIGGINS

FIGGINS	2017	RIESLING	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$30	WHITE	86-89
FIGGINS	2015	RED WINE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$85	RED	96

Not yet bottled, the **2017 Riesling** from Figgins is a juicy apple and mineral (maybe even a hint of petrol) scented effort that has that classic racy acidity this cuvée always shows, yet offers solid offsetting sweetness on the palate. It's always a unique, singular wine.

Made from a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Petit Verdot aged 21 months in 69% new French oak, the **2015 Red Wine** from Figgins is a

beauty that's all from their estate vineyard located on the eastern, cooler side of the Walla Walla Valley. Deep, rich, full-bodied, and incredibly opulent, with loads of blackcurrants, smoked herbs, graphite, and chocolate aromas and flavors, it stays beautifully balanced and elegant on the palate, with sweet tannin. It's a killer Washington State red that's going to drink nicely for 10-15 years. www.figginsfamily.com

FORCE MAJEURE

FORCE MAJEURE	2016	VIIGNIER	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	WHITE	92
FORCE MAJEURE	2017	VIIGNIER	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	WHITE	90-92
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	PARABELLUM RHONE BLEND	RED MOUNTAIN	\$45	RED	92-93
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	PARABELLUM ALLUVIO	RED MOUNTAIN	\$55	RED	94
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	PARVATA GSM	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	SYRAH	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	95
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	EPINETTE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	96
FORCE MAJEURE	2015	TEMPRANILLO	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	98+
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	PARABELLUM COULEE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$45	RED	92-94
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	PARABELLUM ALLUVIO	RED MOUNTAIN	\$55	RED	92-94
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	PARVATA	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94-96
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	SYRAH RED MOUNTAIN ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	96-99
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	EPINETTE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94-96
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	97-99
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	TEMPRANILLO RED MOUNTAIN ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	95-97
FORCE MAJEURE	2016	SYRAH SJR VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	97-100
FORCE MAJEURE	2013	COLLABORATION SERIES VI	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	92

Now focusing almost exclusively on their Red Mountain estate vineyards, Force Majeure is making some of the most compelling wines in

Washington State, as well as in the United States. Winemaker Todd Alexander (previously at Bryant Family in Napa Valley) came on board in

2014 and today the wines show another level of purity and finesse, all while not sacrificing depth of fruit or texture. Both the 2015s and 2016 are terrific wines, with a small edge going to the 2016s. Trust me, these are gorgeous wines you need to try.

Tasted out of bottle, the **2016 Viognier** saw only partial malolactic fermentation and was brought up mostly neutral wood, with 10 %in concrete. It's up with the finest examples of this variety in the New World and offers beautiful notes of pineapples, buttered citrus, and a just a hint of apricot. Medium to full-bodied, rich and textured, it has real Viognier character and will drink nicely for 2-3 years.

Tasted as a barrel sample, the **2017 Viognier** is a big, rich, exotic Viognier that packs plenty of oomph, yet has good acidity. Pineapple, peach, tangerine all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, rich, powerful Viognier. Despite being brought up in 50% oak, it's all about pure, clean fruit.

The entry-level Rhône blend is the **2015 Parabellum Rhone Blend**, another beautiful wine well worth its going rate. Blackberries, peppery herbs, chocolate, and a touch of licorice all emerge from this full-bodied, textured beauty that has a seductive, silky style.

The entry-level Bordeaux blend is the **2015 Parabellum Alluvio** and readers wanting a taste of the quality coming from this estate (as well as Red Mountain) should grab a few bottles. Blackcurrants, cassis, crushed rocks and plenty of minerality give way to a full-bodied, structured, tannic yet also voluptuously textured wine that has more than enough fruit to hand its tannic bite. This is a smoking good entry level wine.

Moving to the reds, the Mourvèdre-dominated **2015 Parvata GSM** is a smoking effort loaded with deep, rich aromas and flavors of blackberries, currants, cured meats, and a hint of chocolate. It's full-bodied, deep, concentrated, and perfectly balanced, and is a sensational wine.

The **2015 Syrah** comes all from Red Mountain and offers a full-bodied, yet fresh and elegant profile. Blackberries, scrub brush, smoked meats, and obvious minerality all give way to silky, seamless red that has ultra-fine tannin and great acidity. It's going to put on weight with time in bottle and have 10-15 years of prime drinking.

A Pomerol look-alike, the **2015 Epinette** is mostly Merlot, yet includes 30% Cabernet Franc, 16% Cabernet Franc and 4% Petit Verdot. It's another rich, mouthfilling effort and offers lots of darker, plummy fruits, chocolate, and scorched earth aromas and flavors. With building tannin and serious structure, it isn't for those looking for instant gratification and is going to need a solid 3-5 years of bottle age.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Estate** is a beautiful effort. Sporting a deep ruby/purple color and terrific notes of blackcurrants, cassis, crushed rocks, lead pencil shavings, and chocolate, it hits the palate with a full-bodied, powerful, yet still elegant profile that carries incredible fruit and richness, yet no sense of weight. With beautiful purity of fruit, a balanced, layered style, building tannin, and a great finish, it needs 3-4 years of bottle age and will cruise for two decades in the cellars.

The **2015 Tempranillo** might rival Cayuse's Tempranillo cuvée as the best example of the variety in the United States. Just loaded with notions of exotic spices, cured meats, country ham, liquid violets, and beautiful crème de cassis fruit, it's deep, full-bodied, and seamless on the palate, with phenomenal depth and richness. It has loads of ripe tannin, but they're mostly concealed behind a wealth of fruit. This *tour de force* needs

2-3 years of bottle age and will knock your socks off over the following two decades.

Moving to the 2016s and a blend of 75% Syrah and 25% Mourvèdre, the **2016 Parabellum Coulee** is a richer, riper wine, yet it still has gorgeous blackberry fruits, hints of peppery and spice, full-bodied richness, ultra-fine tannin and a good finish. It's ripe and sexy, yet also elegant, and will drink nicely right out of the gate.

Made from mostly Cabernet Franc, the **2016 Parabellum Alluvio** offers more dark fruits as well as classic Cabernet Franc notes of violets, dried herbs, damp earth, and spice. It's rich, full-bodied, broad and expansive, with a ripe, rounded style.

A blend of mostly Mourvèdre, the **2016 Parvata** sports a deep purple color as well as gorgeous notes of blueberries, black raspberries, peppery spice, and flowers. With full-bodied richness, silky, fine tannin, and a great texture, it's a seriously beautiful blend that will shine right out of the gate. The purity and polished to the tannin are gorgeous.

The **2016 Syrah Red Mountain Estate** comes from the estate vineyard on Red Mountain. Its deep purple color is followed by an extraordinary bouquet of cassis, white flowers, spice, game, and pepper. Possessing sensational purity of fruit, ultra-fine tannin, no hard edges and an elegant, ethereal style, it's not for those looking for huge aromas and flavors yet is world-class nonetheless.

The **2016 Epinette** is the Merlot-dominated cuvée from the estate and is all from Red Mountain. Deep plum/black colored with a Saint Emilion-like bouquet of blackcurrants, smoke, chocolate, and espresso, this full-bodied, beautifully rich, layered, powerful, yet elegant Merlot is packed with potential.

Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Estate** is another incredible wine from Todd. Crème de cassis, toasted oak, espresso, chalky minerality, and graphite notes all emerge from this full-bodied, silky, layered, perfectly balanced, elegant red that might just flirt with perfection.

Blended with a touch of Grenache, the **2016 Tempranillo Red Mountain Estate** was fermented in new oak before aging in once-used barrels. Inky black-colored with terrific notes of spice black cherries, dried earth, herbs, and graphite, this beauty is full-bodied, rich, structured and tannic, with sensational purity of fruit. Give it 3-4 years of cellaring and drink over the following decade.

Made from 100% destemmed Syrah brought up in 50% new French oak, the **2016 Syrah SJR Vineyard** is a holy shit wine. Blackcurrants, olive tapenade, dried lavender, and pepper notes all literally soar from this smoking good, ultra-fine, pure, seamless, silky Syrah that just hits all the sweet spots.

I was also able to taste one of the last Collaboration Series releases, which is aging beautifully. Made by James Mantone (of Syncline), the **2013 Collaboration Series VI** checks in as a blend of 60% Mourvèdre, 30% Grenache and 10% Syrah, all of which is from the terrific Ciel du Cheval vineyard on Red Mountain, with the fruit farmed by Ryan Johnson. It offers a beautiful perfume of black cherries, herbes de Provence, peppered meats, and white pepper. Deep, medium to full-bodied, seamless and elegant, with juicy acidity and a great finish, it's drinking great today but will certainly continue evolving nicely for another decade. forcemajeurevineyards.com

FORGERON CELLARS

FORGERON CELLARS	2015	FAÇON BLANC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	92
FORGERON CELLARS	2015	CHARDONNAY COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$28	WHITE	91
FORGERON CELLARS	2015	ANVIL CHARDONNAY FRENCH CREEK VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$48	WHITE	94
FORGERON CELLARS	2014	FAÇON ROUGE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	92
FORGERON CELLARS	2014	ANVIL MERLOT MINNICK HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$65	RED	92
FORGERON CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$35	RED	89

I continue to love the wines from Marie-Eve Gilla and she makes a rich, powerful, yet also elegant style of wine from various sites in Washington State.

Forgeron always makes a quality white and the **2015 Façon Blanc** is no exception. Buttered citrus, white flowers, brioche, and spice notes all emerge from this rich, medium to full-bodied, nicely concentrated, juicy white that has richness and freshness. This vintage is 39% Roussanne, 34% Viognier, and 27% Grenache Blanc aged 4 months in 100% neutral French oak.

The value-priced **2015 Chardonnay Columbia Valley** is 100% Chardonnay brought up in 35% new French oak. Apple blossom, white flowers, spice, and a hint of pineapple all emerge from the glass. It's rich, textured, and balanced on the palate, with beautiful fruit.

The top Chardonnay is the **2015 ANVIL Chardonnay French Creek Vineyard**, 100% Chardonnay that spent 16 months in 50% new French oak. Lighter gold-colored with rocking notes of sautéed citrus and stone fruits, brioche, honeysuckle, and white flowers, this beauty is concentrated, supple, and pure, with terrific elegance and purity. It's incredibly classy, has a touch of oak to integrate, yet should keep for 7-8

years, probably longer. 110 cases.

The **2014 Façon Rouge** checks in as a blend of 58% Syrah, 26% Mourvèdre, and 16% Grenache brought up in mostly neutral barrels. Its deep ruby/purple color is followed by lots of ripe black cherry and darker berry fruits, damp earth, and underbrush aromatics. With a rich, full-bodied style, beautiful purity and fine tannin, it's a terrific wine from Marie-Eve Gilla. It should keep for 7-8 years, if not longer.

The 100% Merlot **2014 ANVIL Merlot Minnick Hills Vineyard** spent a full 30 months in new French oak. Deep purple in color with a big, unctuous bouquet of blackcurrants, graphite, and chocolate, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, rounded, sweet tannin, a big mid-palate, and a great finish. Ripe, sexy, and ready to go, drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

Aged 20 months in 35% French oak, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon** has a classic style in its cassis, toasted spice, crushed violets, and vanilla-laced aromas and flavors. With medium to full-bodied richness, a forward, charming style, and good purity, it's ideal for drinking over the coming 4-7 years. www.forgeroncellars.com

GARD VINTNERS

GARD VINTNERS	2014	SYRAH GRAND KLASSE	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$50	RED	90+
GARD VINTNERS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON LAWERENCE ESTATE GRAND KLASSE	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$55	RED	90
GARD VINTNERS	2015	THE DON LAWERENCE ESTATE	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$25	RED	89
GARD VINTNERS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON LAWERENCE ESTATE	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$35	RED	90
GARD VINTNERS	2015	VAUCLUSE LAWERENCE ESTATE	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$35	RED	92
GARD VINTNERS	2015	REVERENCE LAWERENCE ESTATE	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$50	RED	93

These latest Gard Vintners releases are made by Aryn Morell. The **2014 Syrah Grand Klasse** (100% Syrah brought up in 75% new French oak) is a firm, focused, yet concentrated effort that has lots of black fruits, smoked oak, and dark chocolate aromas and flavors. With good density, integrated acidity and a focused style, give it a year or so to see if it fleshes out on the palate.

Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged 22 months in 80% new French oak, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Lawrence Estate Grand Klasse** has a pretty, lively perfume of ripe black cherries and black raspberries, cedarwood, and leafy herbs. It's medium to full-bodied, has nicely integrated acidity, fine tannin, and a balanced, elegant style that's going to allow it to drink nicely for 7-8 years.

The **2015 The Don Lawrence Estate** is a value-priced blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Syrah, 3% Grenache, and 1% each of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, all aged 20 months in 30% new French and American oak. It offers a sweetly fruited, charming style as well as plenty of spice, incense, and cassis-like fruits. With rock solid balance and a good finish, it has plenty of character and is worth the money.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Lawrence Estate** offers more tobacco, leafy herbs, and licorice, with similar cassis and floral aromas and flavors. It's medium to full-bodied, silky, and pure, with fine tannin, all making for a beautiful Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon that's going to keep for a decade. This cuvée is 83% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Malbec that spent 21 months in 71% new French and American oak.

A blend of 72% Syrah, 27% Grenache, 1% that spent 9 months in 29% new French oak, the **2015 Vacluse Lawrence Estate** sports an inky color to go with beautiful Syrah notes of plums, cured meats, olive tapenade, and peppered meats. With medium to full-bodied richness, excellent purity, a big mid-palate, and a great finish, it's a terrific wine.

Slightly more expensive, the **2015 Reverence Lawrence Estate** is 49% Syrah, 38% Grenache, and 13% Viognier brought up in new and used 500-liter French oak barrels. It too is inky colored and yields beautiful notes of blueberries, bay leaf, leafy herbs, and pepper. Silky, pure, full-bodied, and elegant on the palate, it's another killer Syrah from this estate that will keep for a decade. www.gardvintners.com

GILBERT CELLARS

GILBERT CELLARS	2014	CHARDONNAY DOC STEWART	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$40	WHITE	85
GILBERT CELLARS	2013	RESERVE. NO 1 COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$52	RED	89
GILBERT CELLARS	2014	ALLOBROGES SGM	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$24	RED	89
GILBERT CELLARS	2014	MALBEC COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	RED	90
GILBERT CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$32	RED	90
GILBERT CELLARS	2015	LEFT BANK HORSE HEAVEN HILLS RED WINE	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$24	RED	87

The **2014 Chardonnay Doc Stewart** from Gilbert Cellars is all Chardonnay from the Wahluke Slope brought up all in new oak. This medium gold-colored effort offers exotic, overripe and heavy aromas and flavors. It is best drunk up.

The **2013 Reserve. No 1 Columbia Valley** from Gilbert Cellars is made from 50% Syrah, 33% Grenache, and 17% Mourvèdre aged 19 months in 35% new French oak. Deep purple-colored with rich notes of plums and blackberry fruits, it has lots of spicy wood, charred earth, and graphite nuances, full-bodied richness, plenty of fruit and a good finish. It's a big, opulent wine that has surprisingly firm, focused tannin that will need to be watched. I'd lean toward drinking bottles over the coming 6-7 years.

Cedar, chocolate, and lots of spice notes, as well as loads of black raspberry fruit, emerge from the **2014 Allobroges SGM**, a medium-bodied, charming, beautifully polished red to drink over the coming 5-6 years. This cuvée checks in as 44% Syrah, 38% Grenache, and 18% Mourvèdre that spent a full 30 months in mostly neutral barrels (10% new).

Made from 100% Ma bec that spent 28 months in 38% new French oak, the **2014 Malbec Columbia Valley** gives up a deep, inky color to go with terrific notes of blueberries, raspberries, candied watermelon, and spring flowers. It's fresh and lively, yet has a solid core of fruit, ripe tannin, and a great finish. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley** (92% Cabernet Sauvignon and 8% Cabernet Franc aged 17 months in 62% new French oak) is also deeply colored, with classic notes of black fruits, tobacco, earth, and spice all front and center. Like the Malbec, it's fresh and lively, with plenty of fruit, present tannin, and a clean finish. Drink it over the coming decade.

The **2015 Left Bank Horse Heaven Hills Red Wine** (57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 38% Merlot, and 5% Petit Verdot aged 19 months in 25% new French oak) has a touch of obtrusive oak, as well as perfumed notes of incense, lavender, and leafy herbs. With plum and raspberry fruit, medium to full-bodied richness, and a good finish, it's a charming, enjoyable Cabernet to drink over the coming 7-8 years. gibertcellars.com

GORMAN

GORMAN	2015	ZACHARY'S LADDER	RED MOUNTAIN	\$30	RED	92
GORMAN	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON THE FOG OLD VINE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$80	RED	96
GORMAN	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON THE BULLY	RED MOUNTAIN	\$50	RED	95
GORMAN	2015	THE DEVIL YOU DON'T KNOW	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$28	RED	90
GORMAN	2015	THE EVIL TWIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$65	RED	92

This is another sensational lineup from winemaker Chris Gorman.

The **2015 Zachary's Ladder** from Gorman checks in as a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot that spent 22 months in 30% new French oak. Classic Red Mountain notes of graphite, dried earth, crushed rocks, and spice all give way to a beautifully ripe, sexy, sweetly fruited effort that has tons of black and blue fruit, full-bodied richness, and undeniable charm and character.

Coming all from old vine Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon and aged close to two years in new barrels, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon The Fog Old Vine** is a brilliant, rich, full-bodied Cabernet. Crème de cassis, scorched earth, graphite, and licorice aromatics, sweet tannin, a beautiful mid-palate, and impeccable balance make for an irresistible, high-quality wine from Chris that I'd be thrilled to enjoy anytime over the coming 15-20 years. While Chris is known for ripe, full-throttle wines, this is balanced, layered, and classic all the way. Bravo!

Plums, blueberries, leafy herbs, and a hint of spring flowers emerge from

the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon The Bully**, which spent 23 months in new French oak. It's a rich, full-bodied, elegant, beautifully pure Cabernet Sauvignon that has the classic minerality of Red Mountain, yet stays fresh, balanced, and just glides across the palate. It's another beautiful wine from this talented winemaker.

The **2015 The Devil You Don't Know** is a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre brought up all in American oak. This forward, sexy, consumer-friendly effort offers loads of black raspberry and blueberry fruits, plenty of vanilla and spice, medium to full body, and a clean finish. It's a deliciously gulpable effort that offers plenty of character.

The **2015 The Evil Twin** is 75% Syrah and 25% Cabernet Sauvignon that spent close to two years in new French oak. Its vibrant purple color is followed by a ripe, sexy, pedal-to-the-metal bouquet of black raspberries, cassis, toasty oak, spice, and vanilla. Possessing full-bodied richness, notable purity, and freshness, and ripe tannin, it's a blockbuster Syrah from Gorman that will drink nicely for 7-8 years. Gormanwinery.Com

GRAMERCY CELLARS

GRAMERCY CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$50	RED	92+
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RESERVE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$95	RED	95
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	GRENACHE THE THIRD MAN	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$36	RED	90
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	MOURVÈDRE L'IDIOT DU VILLAGE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$42	RED	91
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	SYRAH FORGOTTEN HILLS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93+
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	SYRAH COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$36	RED	94
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	SYRAH THE DEUCE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$54	RED	92
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	SYRAH LAGNIAPPE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	98
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2015	SYRAH JOHN LEWIS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$85	RED	98+
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2016	SYRAH FORGOTTEN HILLS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	90-93
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2016	SYRAH LES COLLINES	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$54	RED	92-94
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2016	SYRAH WALLA WALLA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$36	RED	89-92
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2016	SYRAH LAGNIAPPE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	92-94
GRAMERCY CELLARS	2016	SYRAH JOHN LEWIS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$85	RED	92-94+

The team of Greg Harrington and Brandon Moss continue to keep Gramercy Cellars near the top of the hierarchy in Washington State. While they started out with a focus on Syrah, today they produce a brilliant lineup of both Rhône and Bordeaux blends. The 2016s, which were tasted from barrel, were surprisingly fresh and lively, and I suspect harvested on the earlier side. It will be interesting to see how these come together in bottle. The 2015s are a step up and are some of the finest I've tasted from this team.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon** from Gramercy checks in as a blend of 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Petit Verdot that spent 21 months in 40% new French oak. It offers a fresh, lively style in its cassis, blackcurrant, spice, and underbrush/tobacco aromas and flavors. With medium to full body, beautiful balance, undeniable elegance, and everything in the right place, it's going to drink nicely for 15-20 years.

The flagship Cabernet Sauvignon (there's 1% Petit Verdot) is the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve**, which spent 21 months in 60% new French oak. With a deep purple/ruby color and classic notes of crème de cassis, leafy herbs, lead pencil shavings, and spring flowers, it hits the palate with a fresh, medium to full-bodied profile that carries ripe tannin and integrated acidity. As with all these latest releases from Greg and Brandon, it leans toward the more fresh, elegant end of the spectrum. Give bottles 2-3 years and enjoy over the following 15+.

Lighter ruby colored with terrific notes of kirsch, black cherries, dried herbs, and earth, the **2015 Grenache The Third Man** is sweetly fruited, charming, and balanced, with loads of charm. A blend of 75% Grenache, 15% Syrah, and 5% each of Mourvèdre and Carignan (which is a variety you don't find in Washington very often), drink it over the coming 4-6 years.

Made from 100% Mourvèdre raised mostly in concrete, the **2015 Mourvèdre L'Idiot du Village** sports a deep purple color as well as meaty, bloody notes of blackberries, black cherries, iodine, cured meats, and peppery spice. This beauty is medium to full-bodied, silky and elegant on the palate, and has the depth and balance to keep for at least 7-8 years.

From a site in Walla Walla and aged in 10% new puncheons, the ruby/plum-colored **2015 Syrah Forgotten Hills** offers beautiful notes of plums, black cherries, leather, cured meats, and rose petals. With classic Syrah gamey meatiness, medium to full-bodied richness, and bright acidity, it's going to benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and keep through 2027.

Coming from sites in the Columbia Valley, the **2015 Syrah Columbia Valley** spent 19 months in 10% new French oak. It's a terrific Syrah that has classic ripe dark fruits, tapenade, peppery herbs, and meaty aromas and flavors. Rich, medium to full-bodied, beautifully balanced and long, it's a smoking value that will appeal to both old and new world Syrah lovers.

The **2015 Syrah The Deuce** comes all from Walla Walla and spent 19 months in mostly neutral oak. It's a great introduction for readers looking to understand high-quality Syrah from Washington, as well as the wines from this terrific estate.

Plums, raspberries, flowers, spice, and more earthy notes all flow to a pure, elegant Syrah that has integrated acidity, fine tannin, and a balanced, pure, elegant style that's going to evolve nicely for at least 7-8 years.

Always one of my favorite releases from this estate, the **2015 Syrah Lagniappe** is 100% Syrah (mostly from the Red Willow Vineyard in Yakima, with 5% from the Forgotten Hills Vineyard just south of Walla Walla). Deep ruby/plum-colored and loaded with Côte Rôtie-like (Côte Blonde?) notes of black raspberries, crushed flowers, tapenade, and crushed flowers, this beauty is medium to full-bodied, seamless, and silky on the palate, with incredible finesse and elegance. It's going to benefit from 3-4 years of bottle age and knock your socks off over the following decade or more. It's unquestionably one of the wines of the vintage.

Another tour de force, the **2015 Syrah John Lewis** offers more lavender, violets, and minerality, as well as incredible black and blue fruits. This peppery, meaty, rich, full-bodied effort has building tannin, awesome purity, and integrated acidity, and it's certainly one of the finest Syrahs in the vintage. It's more tannic than the Lagniappe Cuvée and is going to benefit from short-term cellaring, with two decades of overall longevity. Bravo! This vintage comes from a single block in the Les Collines Vineyard, in Walla Walla, isn't destemmed, and spends 19 months in 7% new French oak puncheons.

Coming from a site just south of the town of Walla Walla that saw plenty of stems and is still aging in mostly neutral oak, the **2016 Syrah Forgotten Hills** is another very juicy, lively wine that has high yet integrated acidity. Blackcurrants, black cherries, underbrush, green herbs, and a touch of wet stone all emerge from this juicy, medium-bodied, fresh and elegant wine.

Lavender, violets, black pepper, and game notes all emerge from the **2016 Syrah Les Collines**, a Côte Rôtie look-alike. Medium-bodied, fresh, and lively, I love its balance as well as its depth of fruit. It should benefit from short-term cellaring and keep for a decade.

Deep ruby/plum-colored, with lots of smoke, tobacco, peppery herbs, and earthy aromas and flavors, the **2016 Syrah Walla Walla** is medium to full-bodied, juicy and lively, with bright acidity. Like all these 2016s from Greg, I'm sure it was harvested on the earlier side.

Coming from the Red Willow Vineyard (the 2015 has a splash from the Forgotten Hills Vineyard), the **2016 Syrah Lagniappe** is juicy and lively, with lots of blue fruits, sappy herbs, violets, and hints of blood orange all emerging from the glass. With bright yet integrated acidity, polished, elegant tannin, and a juicy style, it's going to benefit from 2-4 years of bottle age and keep for a decade.

The flagship is the **2016 Syrah John Lewis**, which comes from a mix of vineyards in 2016 including Forgotten Hills, Red Willow, Les Collines, and SJR. Blackberries, peppery herbs, game, and lots of minerality all emerge from the glass, and it shows the fresher, elegant style of the estate in its integrated acidity and fine tannin. It's another wine that will benefit from 3-4 years of bottle age. gramercycellars.com

HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS

HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS	2016	CABERNET FRANC LAKE CHELAN	LAKE CHELAN	\$45	RED	93-95
HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS	2016	SYRAH LAKE CHELAN	LAKE CHELAN	\$38	RED	91-94
HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS	2016	PINOT NOIR LAKE CHELAN	LAKE CHELAN	\$50	RED	91
HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS	2016	BARBERA	WASHINGTON STATE	\$45	RED	91
HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS	2016	TEMPRANILLO LAKE CHELAN	LAKE CHELAN	\$45	RED	90
HARD ROW TO HOE VINEYARDS	2016	PRIMITIVO WAHLUKE SLOPE	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$49	RED	88

This estate makes a bevy of beautiful wines from the Lake Chelan AVA, which is located in the northern part of the State. Their 2016 Cabernet Franc, in particular, is well worth seeking out.

From the Lake Chelan AVA and 100% Cabernet Franc, the **2016 Cabernet Franc Lake Chelan** is deep ruby/purple-colored and offers killer notes of black raspberries, violets, leafy herbs and lead pencil. Pure, silky and pure, with a beautiful grace and elegance, it benefits from time in the glass and

should be even better in 2-3 years. It's going to keep for a decade or more. It's possibly the finest wine I've tasted from this appellation.

Another inky barrel sample, the **2016 Syrah Lake Chelan** offers a big, ripe bouquet of plums, currants, smoked herbs, chocolate, and spice. Deep, full-bodied, and thrillingly textured, it's another hedonistic effort from this estate that has good purity and freshness. This 2016 is 100% Syrah that will see 18 months in 50% new French oak.

Medium ruby-colored with classic Pinot Noir notes of mulled cherries, spice, and underbrush, the **2016 Pinot Noir Lake Chelan** is medium-bodied, seamless and elegant on the palate, with a fine, finesse-driven style. It has true Pinot Noir typicity, is nicely balanced, and has loads to love. You don't find many noteworthy Pinot Noirs from Washington, but this is one of them.

Deep purple-colored, the **2016 Barbera** (100% Barbera brought up all in neutral oak) offers tons of juicy berry fruits, charcoal, and hints of dark chocolate in its ripe, yet pure, elegant style. It's a total gem of a wine to drink over the coming 3-5 years.

A blend of 88% Tempranillo and 12% Syrah, the **2016 Tempranillo Lake**

Chelan is another quality wine from this estate. Blackcurrants, dried cherries, cedary spice, and savory herbs all emerge from this medium-bodied, silky, polished red that has fine tannin and a clean, lengthy finish. This cuvée spent 12 months in once and twice-used French oak, and it should keep for at least 4-6 years.

A blend of 86% Primitivo and 14% Petite Sirah, the **2016 Primitivo Wahluke Slope** is a sweetly fruity, ripe, polished effort. With some obvious sweetness, loads of charming fruit, spice, and berry fruits, drink this charming, medium to full-bodied effort over the coming couple of years. www.hardrow.com

HEDGES FAMILY ESTATE

HEDGES FAMILY ESTATE	2014	SYRAH DESCENDANTS LIÉGEOIS DUPONT	RED MOUNTAIN	\$28	RED	90+
HEDGES FAMILY ESTATE	2014	RED MOUNTAIN ESTATE RED WINE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$28	RED	90
HEDGES FAMILY ESTATE	2015	CMS CABERNET SAUVIGNON MERLOT SYRAH	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$14	RED	88
HEDGES FAMILY ESTATE	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN ESTATE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$40	RED	90
HEDGES FAMILY ESTATE	2015	LA HAUTE CUVÉE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$60	RED	91

This is another fine lineup from winemaker Sarah Hedges, who has been at this family estate full-time since 2006, becoming the head winemaker in 2015 when her uncle retired. These classic, old-world styled efforts come all from the estate vineyard on Red Mountain and hidden gems worth the money.

The **2014 Syrah Descendants Liégeois Dupont** checks in as 100% Syrah that was fully destemmed and aged 11 months in 40% new American oak. Blackberries, plums, cedary herbs, damp earth, and graphite notes all emerge from the glass. Ripe, concentrated, and lively on the palate, with a tight feel in its tannin and texture, it's another impressive Syrah from winemaker Sarah Hedges. It has plenty of fruit, yet an Old-World character that I love.

The **2014 Red Mountain Estate Red Wine** is another outstanding wine. Coming from 58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot and the balance Syrah, it has a perfumed, plum, violet, and cedar driven bouquet to go with a medium to full-bodied, concentrated chewy style on the palate. With good acidity, plenty of character, and a good finish, it's going to drink nicely for 8-10 years.

The entry-level release is the **2015 CMS Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot Syrah**.

It's 65% Merlot, 27% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest Syrah brought up in a mix of French and American oak. A great value, it offers medium-bodied notes of tobacco, olives, damp herbs, and earthy dark fruits. It has an herbal edge that won't be for everyone, yet I like it.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Estate** offers more spice and incense, with loads of plum, blackberry and currant fruits front and center. Made from 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, and the rest Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Souzao, this medium to full-bodied effort has an old-school, rustic style, yet loads of character as well as good purity of fruit, ripe tannin, and a clean finish. I suspect it will keep for 8-10 years, probably longer.

The top cuvée is the **2015 La Haute Cuvée**, which is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon brought up in 40% new American oak barrels. Sweet spice, vanilla, plums, incense, and loads of cedar all flow to a medium to full-bodied, rich, textured red that has enough tannin to warrant a year or two in the cellar. It's another unique, character-filled wine from an estate that's on the upswing. www.hedgesfamilyestate.com

HOLOCENE

HOLOCENE	2016	PINOT NOIR MEMORIALIS	OREGON	NA	RED	91-93
HOLOCENE	2016	PINOT NOIR APOCRYPHA	OREGON	NA	RED	92-95
HOLOCENE	2017	PINOT NOIR MEMORIALIS	OREGON	\$60	RED	93-95
HOLOCENE	2017	PINOT NOIR APRCRYPHA	OREGON	\$60	RED	93-95

While falling outside the purview of this report, I'm always able to taste these Oregon releases from winemaker Todd Alexander at my tasting at Force Majeure. These are rich, yet classic Oregon Pinot Noirs that have singular characters. I'm thrilled to be able to include the wines here.

Leading off the barrel samples, the **2016 Pinot Noir Memorialis** is a ripe, rounded Pinot Noir that has beautiful notes of exotic flowers, violets, black raspberries and sweet cherries. It's a seamless beauty that will certainly end up being an outstanding wine.

Even better, the **2016 Pinot Noir Apocrypha** is sensational looking Oregon Pinot Noir that does everything right. Spice, kirsch, dried flowers, and forest floor characteristics all flow to a deep, rich, beautifully concentrated 2016 that has

sweet tannin, no hard edges, and a great finish. Still aging in 40% new French oak, it's going to drink nicely right out of the gate.

Raspberry, dried flowers, sappy herbs, and hints of strawberries all emerge from the **2017 Pinot Noir Memorialis**, which is fresh and lively on the palate, with a tight, tactile, grippy sensation. With beautiful purity, integrated acidity and a great finish, it has a touch of Chambolle-Musigny character and will keep for a decade or more.

More blue fruits and black cherry notes, as well as lots of violets and sappy herbs, emerge from the **2017 Pinot Noir Aprcrypha**, a bigger, slightly richer wine than the Memorialis cuvée. With vibrant acidity, fine tannin, and a great finish, it's another beautiful wine from Todd that will evolve beautifully. holocenewines.com

HORS CATEGORIE

HORS CATEGORIE	2015	SYRAH	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	97+
HORS CATEGORIE	2016	SYRAH	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97+

From Christophe Baron and the team at Cayuse, the **2015 Syrah** is only the second vintage from this steep, rocky vineyard located south of the town of Milton-Freewater, in the North Fork of the Walla Walla River. Despite coming from a different terroir than the Rocks region, it certainly has some classic gaminess that's common from that region. Blackcurrants, bloody meats, ground pepper, lavender, and exotic spices all emerge from the glass, and it needs lots of air time to show at its best. Deep, full-bodied, and seamless, with sweet tannin, it's a singular Syrah that needs 4-5 years of bottle age and will knock your socks off over the following 10-15 years.

Tasted out of barrel, the **2016 Syrah** reminds me of the Côte Rôtie Côte Brune release from Jean-Paul Jamet. Deep ruby/purple-colored and loaded with dark fruits, scorched earth, decayed flowers, chocolate, and pepper, it hits the palate with a powerful, full-bodied style that carries, nicely nitrated acidity, building tannin, a rock-solid mid-palate, and a great finish. While the aromatics aren't far off what's produced from Christophe's Cayuse Syrah, a bit more savory and mineral-driven, the structure and tannins have a different feel and are more present. Short-term cellaring will be your friend and this beauty will easily keep for 10-15+ years. horscategorievineyards.com

HORSEPOWER

HORSEPOWER	2015	GRENADE SUR ECHALAS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
HORSEPOWER	2015	SYRAH SUR ECHALAS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	93+
HORSEPOWER	2015	SYRAH THE TRIBE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95+
HORSEPOWER	2016	GRENADE SUR ECHALAS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97
HORSEPOWER	2016	SYRAH SUR ECHALAS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	96-98
HORSEPOWER	2016	SYRAH THE TRIBE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97
HORSEPOWER	2016	SYRAH HIGH CONTRAST VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	96-99

The Horsepower wines are made at Cayuse yet from their own set of vineyards which are farmed exclusively by horses. The wines share plenty of

similarities with the Cayuse releases, yet have slightly more backward profiles that demand bottle age to show at their best.

The **2015 Grenache Sur Echalas Vineyard** is a classic expression of both the terroir and the variety. Black cherries, strawberries, ground pepper, and forest floor notes all flow to a medium to full-bodied, si ky Grenache that has incredible character and depth. Drink it over the coming decade.

The **2015 Syrah Sur Echalas Vineyard** is a savory, tertiary effort that's reminiscent of red wine filtered through a rocky riverbed. Earth, chalky minerality, wood smoke, and sous bois notes, as well as both red and black fruits, give way to a medium to full-bodied, seamless Syrah that has light tannin, no hard edges, and a singular, transparent character. It's going to gain weight with 2-3 years in bottle and drink well for a decade.

Cut from the same cloth, the **2015 Syrah The Tribe Vineyard** offers slightly more depth and length. Blackcurrants, ground pepper, smoked earth, and a beef broth-like meatiness all emerge from this full-bodied, deep, layered Syrah that offers more purity and floral nuances with time in the glass. Like the Sur Echalas Vineyard release, it has silky tannin, integrated acidity, and a great finish. Give it 2-3 years of bottle age and it's going to drink nicely for a decade. If drinking anytime soon, don't be afraid to give all these Horsepower releases plenty of airtime.

Moving to the barrel samples, the **2016 Grenache Sur Echalas Vineyard** is deep ruby/plum-colored and offers an incredibly spicy bouquet of black raspberries, white pepper, cedarwood, scorched earth and burnt spices. Deep, powerful and structured on the palate, with a great mid-palate and

building tannin, it's a sensational Grenache that's going to benefit from 2-4 years of bottle age and drink brilliantly over the following 10-15.

Like the Grenache, the **2016 Syrah Sur Echalas Vineyard** is beautifully complex and nuanced on the nose, with lots of macerated cherry and plums fruits, ground pepper, roasted meats, and dried flower nuances all emerging from the glass. It's another powerful, full-bodied Syrah that has a distinct bloody/salty character, juicy acidity, and a big finish that causes you to salivate. As with all the Horsepower wines, it's going to need 2-4 years of bottle age to show its true potential.

The **2016 Syrah The Tribe Vineyard** is slightly more straight and focused than the Sur Echalas Vineyard, revealing a deep purple color, lots of cassis and plum fruits, full-bodied richness, and classic meaty, violet, and peppery aromas and flavors. It's slightly less exotic than the Sur Echalas release, yet is still a beautiful, concentrated, age-worthy wine. It too needs short-term cellaring and I wouldn't touch a bottle until at least 3-4 years after release.

A new cuvée from the High Contrast Vineyard, which covers three acres of Syrah vines and a tiny amount of Viognier, the **2016 Syrah High Contrast Vineyard** offers a classic Rocks perfume of smoked earth, underbrush, ground pepper, currants, and charcoal. This full-bodied, bloody, meaty, salty Syrah is a singular expression of this majestic grape and could come from nowhere else. Give it 2-3 years if you can and it will keep for another 10-15. horsepowervineyards.com

INTRINSIC

INTRINSIC	2016 RED BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$22	RED	90
INTRINSIC	2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$22	RED	89

Made from 52% Cabernet Franc, 44% Malbec, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 1% Merlot, the **2016 Red Blend** sports a vibrant purple color as well as terrific notes of cassis and blackberry fruits, spice box, licorice, and hints of vanilla. This medium to full-bodied effort has no hard edges, beautiful purity and finesse, and a great finish, all making it a terrific value.

A more Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated blend, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon** is 96% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Cabernet Franc brought up in a mix of concrete tanks and older French oak. More ruby-colored with a core and black cherry and currant fruit, it has an evolved style in its tapenade, brown spice, and leafy herb aromas and flavors. Forward and ready to go, it's best drunk over the coming 3-5 years. www.intrinsicwineco.com

INVOLUNTARY COMMITMENT

INVOLUNTARY COMMITMENT	2016 COLUMBIA VALLEY RED WINE	COLOMBIA VALLEY	\$20	RED	89
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Made from 62% Cabernet Franc, 22% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest Merlot, the **2016 Columbia Valley Red Wine** sports a deep ruby color as well as juicy red berry fruits, exotic flowers, blood orange, and violets.

With medium-bodied richness, a juicy, lively style, fine tannin, and a clean finish, it's a delicious charmer to drink over the coming 3-6 years.

ISENHOWER CELLARS

ISENHOWER CELLARS	2016 VIOGNIER WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$22	WHITE	87
ISENHOWER CELLARS	2016 ROUSSANNE YAKIMA VALLEY	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$22	WHITE	87
ISENHOWER CELLARS	2015 GRENACHE RARA AVIS	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$36	RED	89
ISENHOWER CELLARS	2015 MOURVÈDRE WALLULA VINEYARD	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$36	RED	91
ISENHOWER CELLARS	2015 SYRAH DUTCHMAN VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$36	RED	91

From winemaker Brett Isenhower, the **2016 Viognier Walla Walla Valley** is a slightly honeyed effort that offers lots of classic apricot and tangerine aromatics, medium-bodied richness, and a textured, balanced style on the palate. It has real Viognier typicity and is an enjoyable, solid example of the variety from Washington.

Attractive notes of apple peel, brioche, and touches of minerality and honeysuckle emerge from the **2016 Roussanne Yakima Valley**, another enjoyable, balanced, dry white to drink over the coming year or two. This is 100% Roussanne fermented and aged in a mix of used French oak and stainless steel.

Moving to the reds and a blend of 75% Grenache, 21% Mourvèdre, and 4% Syrah aged in French oak puncheons for 15 months, the ruby/plum, semi-translucent colored **2015 Grenache Rara Avis** is a soft, forward, consumer-friendly beauty that has no hard edges, lots of kirsch and blackberry fruit, plenty

of spice, and a good finish. It's a charmer to drink over the coming 3-4 years.

From a site in the Horse Heaven Hills, the **2015 Mourvèdre Wallula Vineyard** checks in as 100% varietal that saw a touch of stems and 20 months in 12% new French oak. This ripe, rounded, straight up plush beauty gives up loads of peppery herbs, underbrush, and spice, as well as a meaty, darker fruit-driven core. With plenty of fruit, a textured, elegant style, and sweet tannin, drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

Checking in as all Syrah from a single vineyard in the Yakima Valley, the **2015 Syrah Dutchman Vineyard** (43% whole clusters and 20 months in 30% new French oak) offers a deep purple color to go with impressive amounts of black and blue fruits, chocolate, and crushed rock-like minerality. With a medium to full-bodied, ripe, textured personality, well-integrated acidity, and impeccable balance, it's an undeniably sexy Syrah to drink over the coming 6-7 years. isenhowercellars.com

J. BOOKWALTER

J. BOOKWALTER	2015 MERLOT READERS	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	RED	88
J. BOOKWALTER	2015 CABERNET FRANC SUSPENSE CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93
J. BOOKWALTER	2015 CONFLICT CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	92
J. BOOKWALTER	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON PROTAGONIST CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93
J. BOOKWALTER	2015 CHAPTER #8 CONNER LEE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$100	RED	94
J. BOOKWALTER	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON VOLUME #5 DIONYSUS VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$75	RED	90+

Black fruits, hints of olive, and damp earth emerge from the **2015 Merlot Readers**, a charming, mouthfilling, well-made Merlot to drink over the coming 4-5 years. This solid value is 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon brought up in 30% new French oak.

The **2015 Cabernet Franc Suspense Conner Lee Vineyard** checks in as a blend of 83% Cabernet Franc aged 20 months in 30% new French oak. It offers tons of ripe black fruits, tobacco, herbs, and chocolate in a full-bodied, si ky, seamless, pure style. There's an herbal edge that might not appeal to everyone, yet there's nothing green about this beauty, which is

impeccably balanced. I love it.

The **2015 Conflict Conner Lee Vineyard** (47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 45% Merlot and the rest Ma bec) offers a more high-toned style to go with notes of blue fruits, violets, spice, and cedar. It's full-bodied, silky and elegant on the palate, with fine tannin and well-integrated acidity, and I suspect it will age gracefully.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Protagonist Conner Lee Vineyard** is similar to the Conflict, yet offers slightly more earth, lavender, and tobacco, with terrific black and blue fruits. Full-bodied, elegant and silky, with fine, polished tannin, it's another impeccably made red that's going to keep for 10-

12+ years. This cuvée is 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Syrah, 2% Cabernet Franc and the balance Ma bec, aged in 50% new French oak.

The flagship **2015 Chapter #8 Conner Lee Vineyard** is a blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon with the rest Ma bec, Syrah, Cabernet Franc and Merlot. It and comes in a larger, metallic label bottle that's not going to be loved by your shipper, or your cellar racks. Deep inky-colored with terrific notes of crème de cassis and blueberry fruits intermixed with notes of spicy oak, licorice and graphite, it's full-bodied, nicely concentrated, has terrific purity of fruit, and sweet

yet present tannin. It's going to be better with 2-3 years of bottle age and drink beautifully for 10-15 years.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Volume #5 Dionysus Vineyard** checks in as 100% varietal that spent 22 months in 60% new French oak. It offers lots of oak as well as notes of black fruits, scorched earth, toasted spice, and graphite. This is the only place where the oak seems heavy-handed, but the wine has a big mid-palate, ripe tannin, and a good finish, so give bottles a year or three. www.bookwalterwines.com

JB NEUFELD

JB NEUFELD	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON OLD GOAT	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$55	RED	90
JB NEUFELD	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON YAKIMA VALLEY	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$35	RED	89

Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged 31 months in new French oak, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Old Goat** sports an inky purple color to go with lots of plums, Asian spice, dried violets, and cedar aromas and flavors. Full-bodied, rich, and sweetly fruited on the palate, with a touch of dry tannin (which is made even more apparent by elevated volatile acidity), drink this big, rich effort over the coming decade or so.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Yakima Valley** from Neufeld checks in as a blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon and 13% Cabernet Franc, all aged 22 months in just over 60% new French oak. It's another inky colored 2015 that offers perfumed notes of incense, Asian spice, graphite, and licorice, with a core of plum and blueberry fruit. Rich, medium to full-bodied, perfumed and lifted, it has some charm to be sure. www.jbneufeld.com

JM CELLARS

JM CELLARS	2014	TRE FANCIULLI RED MOUNTAIN RED BLEND	RED MOUNTAIN		RED	92
JM CELLARS	2015	CARMENÈRE MARGARET'S VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$55	RED	90
JM CELLARS	2015	BRAMBLE BUMP RED	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	RED	89
JM CELLARS	2015	SYRAH BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$55	RED	94
JM CELLARS	2015	SYRAH RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$49	RED	92

I always love the wines from John Bigelow, who has a beautiful winery located near Woodinville, just northeast of Seattle. The wines are always impeccably made and shine for their purity of fruit and balance.

The **2014 Tre Fanciulli Red Mountain Red Blend** from JM Cellars checks in as 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot and the rest Syrah, aged just under two years in 80% new French oak. It has a pure, classy style in its crème de cassis, spice, and floral aromatics. These carry to a rich, medium to full-bodied, balanced red that has good acidity and the classic purity and balance that's always present in the wines from this estate. It's going to drink nicely for a decade or more.

The **2015 Carmenère Margaret's Vineyard** is 100% varietal that spent 18 months in 50% new oak. Inky colored and perfumed with terrific notes of blackberry fruit, scorched earth and peppery herb aromas and flavors, it's medium to full-bodied, nicely balanced, and has a distinct gravelly, earthy minerality. There are not many stand-alone examples of this variety out there, but this is a good one.

The **2015 Bramble Bump Red** checks in as a mix of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon,

25% Ma bec, and the rest Merlot and Petit Verdot, from multiple vineyards, aged 22 months in 60% new French oak. Black fruits, tobacco, leafy herbs, and earth characteristics all emerge from this plump, rounded, delicious and well-made red. It has character, plenty of fruit, and a good finish, and will keep for 6-8 years.

Brought up in 50% new French and Russian oak, the **2015 Syrah Boushey Vineyard** comes from a terrific site in the Yakima Valley and is a deep, rich, concentrated wine from this estate. Blackberries, crushed rocks, and peppery notes all give way to a medium to full-bodied, backward Syrah that has terrific purity and length. It's holding things close to its vest yet is brilliant stuff. Give it 2-3 years and enjoy through 2027.

The **2015 Syrah Red Mountain** comes from Klipsun and Ciel du Cheval Vineyards (both great sites) and was brought up 50% new French oak barrels. It offers remarkable purity and finesse as well as terrific notes of blackberries, pepper, olive tapenade, and earth. It's medium to full-bodied, has beautiful purity, fine tannin, and a great finish, and is another beautiful wine from this team. www.jmcellars.com

K VINTNERS

K VINTNERS	2015	VIIGNIER POWERLINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA		NA WHITE	94
K VINTNERS	2016	VIIGNIER ART DEN HOED VINEYARD	YAKIMA VLY.		NA WHITE	91
K VINTNERS	2015	GRENACHE THE BOY POWERLINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	95
K VINTNERS	2015	CHARLOTTE RHÔNE BLEND ROCK GARDEN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	95
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH MILBRANDT	COLUMBIA VLY.		NA RED	93
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH THE DEAL	WAHLUKE SLOPE		NA RED	95
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH MOTOR CITY KITTY OLD FIELD BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VLY.		NA RED	94
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH RIVER ROCK	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	95
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH PHIL LANE	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	96
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH THE BEAUTIFUL POWERLINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	97
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH POWERLINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	98
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH KLEIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	98
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH THE HIDDEN	WAHLUKE SLOPE		NA RED	100
K VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH CATTLE KING UPLAND VINEYARD	SNIPES MOUNTAIN		NA RED	100
K VINTNERS	2015	CABERNET / SYRAH ROMA RIVER ROCK VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	93
K VINTNERS	2015	CABERNET / SYRAH OVIDE JACK'S VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA		NA RED	95
K VINTNERS	2015	CABERNET / SYRAH KING COAL STONERIDGE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VLY.		NA RED	98
K VINTNERS	2015	CABERNET / SYRAH THE CREATOR POWERLINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	95
K VINTNERS	2015	MALBEC BRONCHO STONERIDGE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VLY.		NA RED	93
K VINTNERS	2015	SANGIOVESE GUIDO JACK'S VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.		NA RED	92
K VINTNERS	2015	TEMPRANILLO EL JEFE STONERIDGE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VLY.		NA RED	95

One of the highlight tastings I do in Washington State is unquestionably with Charles Smith and Brennon Leighton, who together produce a sensational lineup of Rhône and Bordeaux blends, as well as a seriously good Tempranillo and Sangiovese. The majority of the Cabernet Sauvignon dominated cuvées have been moved from the K Vintners label to the Wine of Substance label, which are also reviewed in this report. All the Rhône blends are not destemmed, see native ferments, and are aged mostly in

used French oak. These are the real deal and are brilliant wines.

A more limited production cuvée all from their estate vineyard, the **2015 Viognier Powerline Vineyard** goes all through malo and is brought up in 10% new puncheons. Still light gold-colored with a sensational bouquet of buttered peach, apricot, honeysuckle, toasted brioche, and crème, this full-bodied, rich, opulent, seriously decadent Viognier stays fresh and lively on the palate. It's a blockbuster, rich, opulent effort that I'd drink over the coming year or two. I'd love

to see what this taste like in 2 years.

Pale yellow in color, the **2016 Viognier Art Den Hoed Vineyard** is brought up in concrete and doesn't go through malolactic fermentation before spending just 4 months in barrel. The ideal is freshness and purity with this cuvée. Buttered citrus, honeysuckle, pineapple, and a kiss of saltiness all emerge from this rich, ripe, textured Viognier that has wonderful purity.

The **2015 Grenache The Boy Powerline Vineyard** comes from the estate vineyard located on the eastern side of Walla Walla. Its medium ruby/plum-colored is followed by a gorgeous bouquet of kirsch liqueur, garrigue, olive brine, and crushed rock. Deep, rich, incred bly pure and elegant, it's the first vintage all from the Powerline vineyard, and it's only the second time it's been 100% Grenache. Not destemmed and aged all in neutral barrels, it's a naked, pure, incredible expression of Grenache that could come from nowhere else.

The **2015 Charlotte Rhône Blend Rock Garden Vineyard** checks in as a co-fermented blend of 43% Grenache, 24% Mourvèdre, 20% Syrah, and 13% Roussanne vinified in concrete aged in neutral puncheons and demi-muids. Its saturated ruby/plum color is followed by a rocking bouquet of smoked meats, dried herbs, spice-box and blackcurrant fruit. It's medium to full-bodied, seamless, and si ky on the palate, yet has savory tannin that's going to keep it drinking beautifully for a decade.

From the Northridge and Clifton Hills Vineyard (both on the Wahluke Slope) brought up in 30% new puncheons, the **2015 Syrah Milbrandt** offers a complex, nuanced style in its lavender, green olive, blackcurrants, and smoked herbs aromas and flavors. It's medium to full-bodied, has plenty of tannins, and will benefit from short-term cellaring.

All from the Sundance Vineyard on the Wahluke Slope, the **2015 Syrah The Deal** (100% Syrah, not destemmed and aged in 30% new puncheons) offers smoking notes of red and black fruits, black olive, smoked earth and a huge meatiness. Full-bodied, silky and seamless, with a rock, mineral, backward style.

The **2015 Syrah Motor City Kitty Old Field Boushey Vineyard** comes all from this site (planted by Brennon and Dick Boushey in 2007) in 2015 and will come from this site going forward. The site is 8 acres consisting of Phelps, 383, 174 clones that are all co-fermented in concrete uprights. It offers crazy notes of smoke tobacco, charcoal, ripe black cherries, currants, and pepper. With medium to full-bodied richness, a lively, pure, pretty style on the palate, and fine tannin, it should put on weight with 2-3 years of bottle age and keep for a decade.

The **2015 Syrah River Rock** is another rock star Syrah from this estate and it's just about overflowing with Rocks character. Currants, smoked herbs, olive brine and some peaty notes all give way to a ripe, concentrated, seamless beauty that has loads of charm and character. With fine tannin and a layered style, it will keep for 10-15 years.

From a tiny 1-acre vineyard (that's about 70 cases) on the eastern side of Walla Walla, the **2015 Syrah Phil Lane** boasts a gorgeous bouquet of smoked herbs, campfire, tapenade, and assorted black, black fruits. Reminding me of a La Landonne from Guigal aromatically, it's full-bodied, seamless, si ky, and flat-out gorgeous on the palate. With fine tannin, no hard edges and a great finish, don't miss this singular Syrah.

Co-fermented with 4% Viognier, the **2015 Syrah The Beautiful Powerline Vineyard** was fermented with plenty of stems and brought up mostly in neutral oak. Candied violets, game, blackcurrants, and incense notes all emerge from this beautiful, seamless beauty. It has a rich, full-bodied profile on the palate as well as a great mid-palate, fine tannin, and nicely integrated acidity. This is another singular, layered, silky beauty from this team. Keep in mind, this comes from very young vines, so I suspect the best is yet to come here, which is saying something at this quality level.

Made from 100% Syrah, the **2015 Syrah Powerline Vineyard** is much more backward, brooding, and mineral-laced, with sensational notes of blackcurrants, cassis, crushed rock, and tapenade. A true powerhouse on the palate, with

terrific concentration, building tannin, and a great, great finish, it's a singular, incredible wine that does everything right. Give bottles 2-3 years and enjoy over the following decade.

Almost always one of my favorite releases at this address, the **2015 Syrah Klein Vineyard** is up with the crème de la crème in the vintage. Plums, candied cherries, violets, lavender, chocolate, and tons of dusty, earthy minerality all emerge from this exotic, singular, full-bodied, effort that has building tannin and a vibrant, rich, textured style. With incredible purity, notable structure, and a lifted, perfumed style, it's flat-out gorgeous.

One of the inkier, blacker colored wines in the lineup, the **2015 Syrah The Hidden** is a profound Syrah and as good as it gets. Blackcurrants, smoked meats, graphite, and tapenade notes all emerge from this seriously badass, deep, rich, balanced beauty. Concentrated, thick, and huge, yet with no weight on the palate, building tannin, and incred ble elegance, it needs to be tasted to be believed. It's unquestionably one of the greatest Syrah from this team.

Another off the charts effort is the **2015 Syrah Cattle King Upland Vineyard**, which is also saturated purple/black in color. Possessing a more backward, yet insanelly pure bouquet of crème de cassis, black fruits, smoked earth, graphite, and violets, it's beautifully concentrated, has no hard edges, thrilling purity, and a gorgeous, layered, awesome, multi-dimensional style. It needs short-term cellaring but is a monumental wine from Washington.

A co-fermented blend of 75/25 Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah from a site in the Rocks region of Walla Walla, the **2015 Cabernet / Syrah Roma River Rock Vineyard** offers lots of spice and dried tobacco notes as well as sweet currant and cherry fruits. Medium-bodied, supple, elegant and charming, drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2015 Cabernet / Syrah Ovide Jack's Vineyard** is named after Charles' father and comes from a site next to River Rock, both in the Rocks region of the Walla Walla Valley. A blend of 70/30 Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, its deep ruby color is followed by a terrific bouquet of blackcurrants, tapenade, dried earth and dried herbs. It's rich, full-bodied, and concentrated, with beautiful depth.

One of winemaker Brenna's favorite wines, the **2015 Cabernet / Syrah King Coal Stoneridge Vineyard** is 75% Cabernet Sauvignon and 25% Syrah from a site on the Royal Slope and was co-fermented and aged in 60% new French oak. Lead pencil, graphite, currants, and tobacco notes all emerge from this pure, seamless, silky beauty that has serious power and depth as well as purity and focus. It's a beautiful, terrific, awesome wine that will keep for 15+ years.

A blend of 80/20 Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, the **2015 Cabernet / Syrah The Creator Powerline Vineyard** offers a perfumed, singular bouquet of blackcurrants, ripe black cherries, tobacco, peat, and olive tapenade. This ripe, sexy, opulent effort has sweet tannin, a layered, rounded, sexy style, and a great finish. It's a pure, sexy red to drink over the coming decade.

Plums, blueberries, crushed rock-like minerality, and a liquid violet character all emerge from the **2015 Malbec Broncho Stoneridge Vineyard**, which has more texture and depth than most. Medium to full-bodied, fresh and lively, with beautiful purity of fruit, it's another terrific wine.

A slightly translucent ruby color, the **2015 Sangiovese Guido Jack's Vineyard** is 100% varietal that was destemmed and brought up in 30-40% new oak. Ripe cherries, dried Provençal herbs, toasted bread and loads of spice nuances all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, silky, elegant wine that has loads of charm. Charles and Brenna love this with some age.

Deep ruby-colored, with an opaque core, the **2015 Tempranillo El Jefe Stoneridge Vineyard** is 100% varietal. Charles and Brennon commented that they do a lot of cluster shaping with Tempranillo to get everything evenly ripe at the same time. Destemmed and aged in 40% new barrique, it reveals a terrific bouquet of black cherries, toasted spice, dried Provençal herbs, and hints of graphite. Medium to full-bodied, pure, elegant and layered on the palate, with fine yet certainly present tannin, it will cruise for a decade. winesofsubstance.com

KOBAYASHI

KOBAYASHI	2015	CABERNET FRANC RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
KOBAYASHI	2016	CABERNET FRANC RED WILLOW VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	93-95

The second vintage for the young, yet talented and motivated Travis Allen, the **2015 Cabernet Franc Red Willow Vineyard** (there's 10% cofermented Cabernet Sauvignon) was fermented in puncheons and aged 12 months in once used barrels. I loved this wine last year and it didn't disappoint this go around either. Beautiful red and black currants, incense, spice, and dried flower notes all flow to a medium to full-bodied, silky, elegant 2015 that has fine tannin, no hard edges, and loads of character. I'd drink bottles over the

coming 5-7 years, but it will keep longer.

The **2016 Cabernet Franc Red Willow Vineyard** is 100% Cabernet Franc and saw a similar elevage to the 2015, aging all in once used barrels. This medium ruby colored effort is more floral, with awesome black raspberry and black cherry fruit, loads of spice and incense, medium to full-bodied richness, and a similar silky, polished, seamless style that just begs to be drunk. It's going to drink nicely for a decade. www.kobayashiwines.com

KERLOO CELLARS

KERLOO CELLARS	2016	CHARDONNAY CELILO VINEYARD	COLUMBIA GORGE	\$48	WHITE	89
KERLOO CELLARS	2015	COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$57	RED	91
KERLOO CELLARS	2015	GRENACHE CALLING CLUB	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$57	RED	93
KERLOO CELLARS	2015	MAJESTIC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$26	RED	88
KERLOO CELLARS	2015	SYRAH RESERVE	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$48	RED	95

Winemaker Ryan Crane, who founded this estate in 2007, doesn't get the recognition he deserves for these Kerloo Cellars releases. Year in, year out,

they show singular, balanced characters and are impeccably made. His latest 2015 Syrah Reserve is the finest wine I've tasted from the estate.

The **2016 Chardonnay Celilo Vineyard** is a racy, vibrant, borderline tart effort that has enjoyable notes of buttered citrus, tart apple, and brioche. It's a medium-bodied, well-made effort to drink over the coming 2-3 years.

Brought up in a mix of new and neutral barrels and all Cabernet from the Columbia Valley, the **2015 Columbia Valley** offers a classic, darker fruited, olive and tobacco-scented bouquet to go with a full-bodied, rich, nicely structured style on the palate. It has plenty of oak and is going to benefit from 2-3 years of bottles age, but is a rich, impressive Cabernet Sauvignon.

Made from 100% Grenache brought up all in neutral French oak, the **2015 Grenache Calling Club** has terrific notes of kirsch and blackberry fruits, decaying flowers, spice, and damp earth. This medium-bodied, supple, elegant beauty expands on the palate, has fine tannin, and is a flavorful, rich,

character filled Grenache that delivers the goods. 92 cases.

The value-priced **2015 Majestic** checks in as a blend of 69% Grenache, 26% Mourvèdre and the rest Syrah, brought up all in neutral oak. It offers a savory style in its black raspberry and cherry fruits, dried herbs, chocolate and spicy aromas and flavors. Drink this medium-bodied, charming, nicely textured blend over the coming 4-5 years.

The **2015 Syrah Reserve** is another rocking effort from winemaker Ryan Crane. Made from 100% Syrah aged in neutral barrels, this inky purple-colored effort has killer notes of blueberries, black raspberries, toasted spice, violets, and sappy spring flowers. It's pure, full-bodied, balanced, and long, with a floral, violets, Côte Rôtie-like style. Drink it over the coming decade. 115 cases. www.kerlocellars.com

LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS

LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS	2014	SYRAH	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	91
LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS	2014	CABERNET FRANC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$40	RED	91
LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS	2014	CUVÉE ESTELLE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$40	RED	92
LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS	2014	CUVÉE ARLETTE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	RED	91
LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS	2014	PROPRIETOR'S CUVÉE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$65	RED	94
LAUREN ASHTON CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$50	RED	93

The Lauren Ashton Cellars releases are made by Kit A Singh. They're always well made and are more than worth seeking out.

The **2014 Syrah** from winemaker Kit Singh is 100% Syrah, destemmed, and aged 36 months in neutral oak. Plums, blackberries, cedary spice, and hints of lead pencil emerge from this medium to full-bodied effort. With fine tannin, a supple, pure, polished texture, and a great finish, it's another terrific wine from this estate.

The **2014 Cabernet Franc** (100% varietal) offers a ruby/plum color as well as impressive notes of black cherries, plums, dusty earth and savory herbs/tobacco. With medium to full-bodied richness, a solid mid-palate, and present, ripe tannin, it's going to drink nicely for 10-15 years.

The **2014 Cuvée Estelle** checks in as a blend of 83% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Petit Verdot and Malbec that spent 36 months in neutral barrels. Deep purple-colored and loaded with notions of blueberries, violets, sappy herbs, and violets, it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, well-integrated acidity, and fine tannin. It's a fresh, lively, downright pretty wine. Give it a year or so to integrate its oak and it's going to keep for 10-15 years.

The **2014 Cuvée Arlette** is roughly 60% Merlot, with the balance Cabernet Franc, Malbec, and Petit Verdot. Like all of Kit's wines, it saw a long élevage in neutral barrels. It's a bigger, richer wine loaded with notions of blueberries, sappy flowers, cedary spice, and graphite. Possessing medium to full-bodied richness, plenty of sweet fruit, and polished, sweet tannin, it's a charming, pure, nicely balanced effort to drink over the coming 8-10 years.

Saturated purple/black colored, the **2014 Proprietor's Cuvée** is a blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet Franc, 17% Merlot and the rest Petit Verdot. It has a killer, full-bodied, balanced profile on the palate to go with terrific notes of blackcurrants, scorched earth, chocolate, and graphite. Rich, full-bodied, layered, and downright sexy, yet still elegant, it's a rocking blend that will keep for 10-15 years.

The 100% varietal **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon** spent 30 months in a mix of new and used barrels. It too is inky colored and offers gorgeous notes of black raspberry and crème de cassis fruit intermixed with notions of violets, cedar, and spice. Rich, full-bodied, opulent and sweetly fruited, drink this hedonistic Cabernet Sauvignon anytime over the coming 10-15 years. www.laurenashtoncellars.com

L'ECOLE NO 41

L'ECOLE NO 41	2016	ESTATE LUMINESCE SEMILLON SAUV. BLANC SEVEN HILLS VYD.	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$22	WHITE	90
L'ECOLE NO 41	2016	SEMILLON	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$15	WHITE	89
L'ECOLE NO 41	2016	CHENIN BLANC OLD VINES	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$16	WHITE	89
L'ECOLE NO 41	2016	CHARDONNAY COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$22	WHITE	89
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$25	RED	88
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	MERLOT ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$37	RED	91
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	FRENCHTOWN RED WINE COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$22	RED	88
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	CABERNET FRANC ESTATE SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$37	RED	91
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$30	RED	89
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$40	RED	91
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	ESTATE PERIGEE SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$55	RED	94
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	APOGEE PEPPER BRIDGE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$55	RED	94
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	ESTATE FERGUSON VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$65	RED	95
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	SYRAH COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$25	RED	91
L'ECOLE NO 41	2015	SYRAH ESTATE SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$37	RED	92

Winemakers Marty Clubb and Mike Sharon are behind this impeccably run estate, which is one of the few in Washington that sees good distribution in the United States. Their entry-level wines are always impeccably made and great values, and their top tier releases can compete with the best of Washington State.

The **2016 Estate Luminesce Semillon Sauvignon Blanc Seven Hills Vineyard** from l'Ecole is 56% Semillon and 44% Sauvignon. Its pale gold color is followed by terrific notes of white peach, buttered citrus, and honeysuckle. These carry to a medium-bodied, rich, textured white that has nicely integrated acidity and a clean finish. It's rock solid and is going to be versatile on the dinner table. I'm seeing more and more high-quality Bordeaux Blanc blends from Washington State, and this is one of them. It's also a great value.

The **2016 Semillon** (there's 14% Sauvignon Blanc) is another fine white. Candied limes, citrus blossom, and a hint of honeysuckle emerge from this medium-bodied, balanced, textured white that has loads of fruit, yet finishes cleanly. It too is a good value.

The **2016 Chenin Blanc Old Vines** is another value that offers a unique, yet versatile style. Dried herbs, hints of minerality, white cherries, and white

peach notes all give way to a balanced, classy, layered white that has enough texture and depth to stand up to spicy food.

Buttered apple, brioche, and honeysuckle notes all emerge from the **2016 Chardonnay Columbia Valley**, a richer, classic Chardonnay to drink over the coming year or so. At 22 bucks, it's a good value.

The base Merlot from this great estate is the **2015 Merlot Columbia Valley**, which spent 18 months in 25% new French oak. Black cherries, passion fruits, violets, and leafy herbs all emerge from this medium-bodied, balanced, deliciously gulpable Merlot that's ideal for drinking over the coming 4-5 years.

The **2015 Merlot Estate** (80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Cabernet Franc) is a more complete wine, offering outstanding notes of blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, and spice, medium to full-bodied richness, and a layered, balanced, expansive texture. Brought up in 30% new French oak, drink this silky, charming, balanced effort over the coming 5-6 years.

The **2015 Frenchtown Red Wine Columbia Valley** is the estate's red blend and is made from 45% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Syrah, and the rest Grenache, Malbec, Cabernet Franc, and Mourvèdre. Black cherries, graphite, damp herbs, and some earthy notes all emerge from this

high quality, balanced effort that's going to be perfect as a house red.

The **2015 Cabernet Franc Estate Seven Hills Vineyard** (100% Cabernet Franc) is terrific and has classic, high-quality Cabernet Franc character. Black cherries, black raspberries, leafy herbs, spring flowers, and a hint of graphite all flow to a medium to full-bodied, balanced, elegant 2015 that has fine tannin, beautiful purity of fruit and a great finish. This character-filled effort will keep for 8-10 years.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley** (22 months in 30% new French oak) is another rich, textured, gorgeously layered beauty that offers loads of bang for the buck. Chocolate, spice, black fruits, and a touch of scorched earth all flow to a medium to full-bodied, supple, nicely textured Cabernet Sauvignon that's impeccably balanced. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

A small step up in quality over the Columbia Valley release, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley** (22 months in 40% new French oak) offers more purity and elegance as well as terrific notes of blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, damp earth, and chocolate. This medium to full-bodied, elegant, si ky beauty has sweet tannin, integrated acidity, and a great finish. It's outstanding stuff.

The **2015 Estate Perigee Seven Hills Vineyard** checks in as a blend of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc, and the rest Malbec and Petit Verdot, aged 22 months in 40% new French oak. It sports a deep purple color as well as terrific notes of ripe plums, violets, blueberries, incense and lead pencil. Pure, beautifully concentrated, layered and elegant, it's another beautiful wine from this team that's made in good quantities.

The **2015 Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard** has the most Cabernet Sauvignon of the three top releases and is 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 10% Malbec, and 5% Cab Franc. Aged 22 months in 40% new oak, it offers loads of blackcurrants, scorched earth, chocolate, and graphite aromatics, full-bodied richness, a si ky, layered texture, and beautiful purity of fruit. It's a big, rich, yet impeccably balanced red.

The **2015 Estate Ferguson Vineyard** checks in as a blend of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 7% Cab Franc, and 7% Malbec that spent 22 months in 50% new oak. It's the smallest production release of the top cuvées and comes from a single vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley. Currants, smoke, graphite, toasty oak and a kiss of tobacco leaf all define this ripe, opulent, gorgeously pure and layered red. With a big mid-palate, sweet tannin, and a great finish, it's a beautiful wine from this estate that can be drunk today or cellaring for 10-15 years.

A terrific value in Washington State Syrah, the **2015 Syrah Columbia Valley** (82% Syrah, 16% Grenache, and 2% Mourvèdre brought up in neutral barrels) offers loads of ripe black fruits, peppery herbs, and earthy goodness in a plump, forward, yet concentrated style. It has top-notch purity, well-integrated acidity, and a great finish, all making for an outstanding Syrah that will keep for 6-8 years.

Slightly more expensive and made from 100% Syrah, the **2015 Syrah Estate Seven Hills Vineyard** is deep purple-colored and boasts ripe black cherries, blueberries, peppery herbs, graphite, and crushed rocks. It's rich, full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, and has both tannin and acidity. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years as well. lecole.com

LEONETTI CELLAR

LEONETTI CELLAR	2013	AGLIANICO SERRA PEDACE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	RED	90+
LEONETTI CELLAR	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$100	RED	96
LEONETTI CELLAR	2015	RESERVE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$150	RED	98
LEONETTI CELLAR	2015	SANGIOVESE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$70	RED	93
LEONETTI CELLAR	2016	MERLOT	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$80	RED	93

This was another terrific lineup from winemaker Chris Figgins, who never seems to miss a step. Both of his Cabernet Sauvignon releases are brilliant wines that check-in near the top of the vintage, but readers also shouldn't miss his straight Merlot and Sangiovese.

A new wine from Chris Figgins (I think), the **2013 Aglianico Serra Pedace Vineyard** is 100% Aglianico that spent a whopping 44 months in a mix of amphora, new French oak, and neutral barrels. Deep purple/black colored with lots of black fruits, scorched earth, chocolate, and gravelly, earthy minerality, it has full-bodied richness, a rich, powerful feel, and bright acidity. It's certainly an interesting wine that has loads of tannin and acidity, and I suspect will be best with 3-5 years of bottle age.

The classic **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon** checks in as a blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Petit Verdot, and 3% Cabernet Franc that spent 22 months in new, once-used and neutral oak. Its purple/blue color is followed by fabulous notes of crème de cassis, lead pencil, tobacco, and graphite. Deep, rich, and opulent, with a sexy, full-bodied, incredibly pure style, it's already impossible to resist but is going to keep for two decades.

The **2015 Reserve** is a borderline perfect wine. Made from 63% Cabernet

Sauvignon, 29% Malbec, and 8% Merlot, its vibrant purple color is followed by a gorgeous nose of crème de cassis, graphite, scorched earth, liquid violets, and charcoal. Full-bodied, deep, voluptuously textured and layered, with sweet tannin, this incredible beauty stays pure and elegant on the palate, with perfect balance. It's going to drink nicely for two decades as well.

Chris's **2015 Sangiovese** (there's 13% Aglianico) spent 22 months in new and once-used barrels. Red currants, ripe cherries, dried earth, spice and a hint of nuttiness all emerge from this deep ruby/opaque colored effort. It's medium to full-bodied, incredibly seamless, silky, and polished, with fine tannin emerging with time in the glass. It's one of the great vintages for this cuvée. Give bottles 2-3 years of bottle age and enjoy over the following decade or more.

I always love the Merlot from Chris and the **2016 Merlot** (there's 5% Cabernet Franc) is no exception. Deep purple-colored and loaded with notions of black cherries, plums, leafy herbs, and graphite, it offers medium to full-bodied richness, bright yet integrated acidity and a great finish. It's a fresh and lively Merlot that I suspect will keep for 10-15 years. www.leonetticellar.com

LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS

LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2016	POET'S LEAP RIESLING	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$20	WHITE	90
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2016	DANCE CHARDONNAY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$37	WHITE	89
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2014	CHESTER KIDDER RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	94+
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2014	SHOUP RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$100	RED	97
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2015	PEDESTAL MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$65	RED	96
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2015	PIROUETTE RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	95
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2015	FEATHER CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$65	RED	97
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2015	SEQUEL SYRAH	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	95
LONG SHADOWS VINTNERS	2015	SAGGI RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	RED	94

Another estate that's been on a roll lately is Alan Shoup's Long Shadow Vintners, with the wines made/managed by the incredibly talented Gilles Nicault.

The **2016 Poet's Leap Riesling** from winemaker Gilles Nicault sports a light gold color to go with lots of lychee nut, crushed rocks, lime, and hints of petrol. It's clean, off-dry, beautifully balanced, and has a great finish. It's good today, but this cuvée can age nicely for over a decade.

The **2016 Dance Chardonnay** from Gilles is also solid. Buttered pineapple, white flowers, honeysuckle, and a touch of spicy oak all give way to a rounded, medium-bodied, balanced, and well-made Chardonnay. Drink it over the coming year or three.

Looking at the **2014 Chester Kidder Red Wine**, it's a blend of 66% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Syrah, and 6% Petit Verdot that spent 30 months in 85% new French oak. This inky purple-colored beauty offers a rocking bouquet of blackcurrants, scorched earth, and dark chocolate, full-bodied richness, a stacked mid-palate, and ripe, polished tannin. It's a big,

rich, age-worthy red that styles impeccably balanced and lively, with notable purity. Count me in as a fan.

The **2014 Shoup Red Wine** (70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Malbec) spent 22 months in 80% new French oak. Reminding me of a great vintage from Chateau Palmer with its sexy black and blue fruits, scorched earth, and spring flower aromas and flavors, this beauty is opulent and hedonistic on the palate, with a broad, expansive, silky texture. Possessing fine tannin, no hard edges, and a great finish, it's going to keep for 15-20 years, although it's far from unapproachable today.

The **2015 Pedestal Merlot** from Long Shadows is a blend of 75% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Petit Verdot aged 22 months in 85% new French oak barrels. Crème de cassis, wood smoke, scorched earth, and graphite characteristics all emerge from this rich, full-bodied, voluptuous beauty that has more mid-palate depth and richness than any other Merlot made in the state. With ample tannin, it will benefit from a year or three and keep for 15. It's a gorgeous wine.

The **2015 Pirouette Red Wine** is a Cabernet Sauvignon dominated cuvée that includes 21% Merlot, 11% Petit Verdot and 3% Ma bec. It spent 22 months in 75% new French oak. Blackcurrants, dark chocolate, crushed rock, and graphite notions all dominate this rich, opulent, beautifully concentrated, layered red. It has enough tannin to warrant short-term cellaring and is going to keep for 10-15+ years.

The **2015 Feather Cabernet Sauvignon** is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon that was brought up in 90% new French oak barrels. Its inky purple color is followed by a seamless, pure, impeccable balanced Cabernet that has loads of currants, scorched earth, graphite, and espresso aromas and flavors. Deep, rich, gorgeously pure and polished, with building tannin, it's a heavenly Cabernet Sauvignon that has everything you could want. It's the finest vintage to date of this cuvée and is capable of lasting for 20-25 years.

Incorporating 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2015 Sequel Syrah** wasn't destemmed and spent 18 months in 65% new French oak. Its inky purple color is followed by a huge nose of blackberry liqueur, espresso roast, scorched earth, and dark chocolate. This is followed by a full-bodied, beautiful Syrah that has remarkable freshness and purity, fine tannin, and a great, great finish. It's always a pedal-to-the-metal effort, yet the 2015 stays beautifully fresh and lively on the palate. This is certainly one of the finest vintages to date.

Crème de cassis, ripe black cherries, licorice, and toasty oak all emerge from the **2015 Saggi Red Wine**, which is a blend of 62% Sangiovese, 28% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Syrah. With an inky color, full-bodied richness, fine, polished tannin and a great finish, it's another terrific wine from this estate that's going to evolve beautifully for 10-15 years. www.longshadows.com

MARK RYAN WINERY

MARK RYAN WINERY	2016	VIIGNIER	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	WHITE	89
MARK RYAN WINERY	2016	CHARDONNAY OLSEN VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$40	WHITE	89
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	MERLOT LITTLE SISTER	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$75	RED	93
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	THE DISSIDENT RED	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$38	RED	93
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	LONG HAUL	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	RED	94
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	DEAD HORSE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$58	RED	95
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	OLD VINES	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$65	RED	95
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	LONELY HEART	RED MOUNTAIN	\$95	RED	95+
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	WATER WITCH	RED MOUNTAIN	\$58	RED	94
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	LUCIA ROSE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	92+
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	OLIVIA GRACE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	95+
MARK RYAN WINERY	2015	WILD EYED SYRAH	RED MOUNTAIN	\$48	RED	93

Another estate that Washington readers need to have on their short list is Mark McNeilly's Mark Ryan Winery. The wines are made by super talented Mike Macmorran and are sourced from throughout Washington State. The wines are always impeccably made and shine for their purity and finesse just as much as richness and power.

This estate always turns out a solid Viognier and the **2016 Viognier** is no exception. Citrus blossom, tangerine, and pineapple notes all emerge from the glass. This beauty is medium-bodied, nicely textured and balanced.

The **2016 Chardonnay Olsen Vineyard** comes all from the Olsen Vineyard in the Yakima Valley and was brought up in 29% new French oak, with 14% brought up in concrete tanks. Medium gold in color with a rounded, rich style in its orchard fruits, brioche, toast, and crushed rock aromas and flavors, it's medium-bodied, supple, and layered, with a ready to go style. I'd drink bottles over the coming year or three.

Moving to the reds, with lots of blue and red fruits, spice box, dried herbs, and a kiss of graphite, the **2015 Merlot Little Sister** is full-bodied, silky, and polished, with a great finish. It's one of the best examples of Merlot (there's 3% Cabernet Franc) coming out of Washington. It's certainly approachable today but is going to continue to impress for 10-12+ years.

The **2015 The Dissident Red** checks in as a blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Franc, and the balance Petit Verdot. Black cherries, blueberries, iodine, liquid violets, and hints of leafy herbs all emerge from the glass. Full-bodied, incredibly sexy, pure, and silky on the palate, it's another blockbuster wine from the team of Mike Macmorran and Mark McNeilly. At 38 dollars, it's also a smoking value.

The **2015 Long Haul** is a Merlot-dominated cuvée that includes 8% Cabernet Franc, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 2% Petit Verdot, all aged 21 months in French oak. It offers a vibrant purple/ruby color as well as classic black cherry, graphite, wet stone, and violet aromas and flavors. It's just another elegant, yet rich, powerful wine from Mike that's beautifully balanced. Drink it over the coming decade.

The **2015 Dead Horse** is a Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated cuvée (there's 8% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot) sourced all from Red Mountain Vineyards and spent 21 months in 84% new French oak. Sweet crème de cassis, black raspberry jam, crushed violets, and graphite characteristics flow to a full-bodied, voluptuous, sexy red that has awesome purity of fruit, fine, sweet tannin, and a great finish. It's gorgeous stuff.

Showing better from bottle than barrel, the terrific **2015 Old Vines** comes

from older vines in the Columbia Valley and is 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Petit Verdot. Crème de cassis, graphite, tobacco leaf, and damp earth notes all give way to a smooth, polished, si ky red that has incredibly polished tannin, a sweet, seamless texture, and a great finish. It's another hedonistic, beautifully pure red that should evolve nicely.

All from Red Mountain (Obelisco, Klipsun, and Olsen Vineyards), the **2015 Lonely Heart** is the flagship cuvée and is the same blend as the Old Vine release, 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Petit Verdot. It offers a similar black/blue fruit profile as well as beautiful spice, graphite, and scorched earth aromas and flavors. While similar to the other Cabernet Sauvignons from Mike, the acidity is slightly more noticeable, and the tannins are more focused and present. This full-bodied, thrilling pure beauty will round into form with 2-3 years of bottle age and is going to keep for two decades.

The inky colored **2015 Water Witch** checks in as 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, aged in 71% new French oak, all from Red Mountain. Dark fruits, smoked herbs, graphite, and hints of chocolate all emerge from this supple, full-bodied, elegant, beautifully pure effort. It shows the classic minerality and tannin of Red Mountain with time in the glass yet is far from unapproachable today.

The **2015 Lucia Rose** is a unique wine made from 100% Petit Verdot brought up in 56% new French oak. Blueberries, violets, mint, and leafy herb notes all emerge from the glass and this beauty is ripe, voluptuous and layered on the palate, with tons of sweet fruit. It has big bones, yet packs in a serious amount of fruit as well. It's a gorgeous expression of Petit Verdot that's going to keep for 15+ years.

The **2015 Olivia Grace** from this terrific estate is all Syrah that spent 18 months in 56% new French oak. Its deep, inky color gives way to a juicy, jammy, primordial Syrah that boasts terrific notes of blueberries, blackberries, creamy oak, and crushed flowers. It's full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, and incredibly pure, it just needs another year in bottle to really come together. Nonetheless, it's an awesome Syrah.

The **2015 Wild Eyed Syrah** checks in as 100% Red Mountain Syrah that was brought up in 44% new 500-liter French oak puncheons. Like all of Mike's wines, this beauty has a vibrant purple color as well as beautiful notes of black raspberries, blackberry jam, and crushed flowers, with more gamey, meaty, olive notions developing with time in the glass. Rich, full-bodied, textured and layered, with beautiful purity, it's another Rockstar wine from this team. www.markryanwinery.com

MATTHEWS

MATTHEWS	2015	MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	RED	93
MATTHEWS	2015	CLARET	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	91
MATTHEWS	2015	RESERVE CLARET	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	94
MATTHEWS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	RED	92

These Matthews releases are made by Aryn Morell, who has a hand in a number of top wines in this report.

The **2015 Merlot** is a blend of 78% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc and 2% Cabernet Sauvignon that was brought up in 69% new French oak. Crème

de cassis, violets, a touch of vanilla bean, and incense all give way to a rich, voluptuous, beautifully textured, ripe Merlot that has sweet tannin and a si ky, elegant texture. It's ready to go yet should keep for at least a decade.

The **2015 Claret** checks in as a 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot,

21% Cabernet Franc and the rest Merlot and Petit Verdot which spent 20 months in 51% new French oak. Cassis, blueberries, leafy herbs, and liquid flower notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, lively, fresh, elegant blend that shines for its purity and sheer drinkability.

The **2015 Reserve Claret** checks in as 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot and the balance Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot that saw more new oak, spending 22 months in 80% new barrels. Similarly inky colored, with beautiful blue fruits, violets, cedar and incense aromatics, this beauty

hits the palate with full-bodied richness, fine, polished tannin, and nicely integrated acidity. It's balanced, has beautiful purity, and a great finish.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon** offers a similar sweetly fruited, polished style. Crème de cassis, vanilla bean, sweet spice, and cedar notes all dominate the bouquet. On the palate, it's full-bodied and silky, with good overall balance and nicely integrated acidity. Possessing sweet tannin and solid length, drink it over the coming decade or more. www.matthewswinery.com

MATTHEWS / TENOR

MATTHEWS / TENOR	2012 SYRAH	WASHINGTON AVA	\$85	RED	95
MATTHEWS / TENOR	2013 SYRAH	WASHINGTON AVA	\$85	RED	94

A new release sourced all from the Royal Slope, the **2012 Syrah** offers a deep, saturated purple color as well as a thrilling bouquet of blackberries, blueberries, peppery meats, and game, with a touch of bacon fat emerging with time in the glass. This deep, rich, beautifully concentrated effort has a full-bodied, expansive, sweetly fruited profile, ripe tannin, and a great finish. It's a gorgeous, layered effort.

Also from the Royal Slope, the **2013 Syrah** is just ever so slightly lighter

at the rim than the 2012, yet sports the same saturated ruby/purple color. It offers more cured meats, tapenade, ground pepper and tobacco leaf notes, with a rich, sexy core of plum and blueberry fruit. Broad, expansive, and sexy on the palate, with tons of fruit, it stays lively, balanced and fresh, and is another beautiful wine. It's much more evolved than the 2012, but both are beautiful wines.

MORELL-PENÑA

MORELL-PENÑA	2016 CHARDONNAY GEMMA CAMARYN	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	WHITE	89
MORELL-PENÑA	2016 CHARDONNAY YSABELLA BJORK	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	WHITE	90
MORELL-PENÑA	2016 CHARDONNAY CAMYLLA LOREN	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$55	WHITE	91

Based out of Walla Walla, Morell-Peña is a new project by well-known consultant Aryn Morell and his wife Edith. They produce three Chardonnays named after their daughters.

The **2016 Chardonnay Gemma Camaryn** comes from the Columbia Valley and is 100% Chardonnay aged in 50% new oak. Chamomile, lemon curd, spicy oak, toasted bread and buttered citrus notes all emerge from the glass of this richer, medium to full-bodied effort. It has a slightly cloudy color and I expect it was bottled unfiltered. It's a richer styled Chardonnay that should keep for 2-4 years.

The **2016 Chardonnay Ysabella Bjork** is also all Chardonnay brought

up in 50% new oak. It sports a medium gold color as well as perfumed notes of candied lemons, caramelized peach, toasted bread, and a touch of honeysuckle. This rich, medium to full-bodied effort has lots of fruit, integrated acidity, and a big finish.

The **2016 Chardonnay Camylla Loren** is similarly colored and offers a rich, full-bodied style in its buttered peach and orchard fruits, toasted bread, and spicy aromas and flavors. The most balanced, as well as complete, of the Chardonnays, drink this big, rich, impressive Chardonnay over the coming 2-3 years. www.morell-pena.com

MTR PRODUCTIONS

MTR PRODUCTIONS	2012 SYRAH MEMORY FOUND	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95
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Matt Reynvaan's own label, the **2012 Syrah Memory Found** is 100% Syrah from their estate The Rocks vineyard that spent two years in barrel, followed by two years in bottle. It's shed a touch of baby fat since release and offers classic

notes of black raspberries, black olives, smoked cedarwood, and bloody meat. Rich, full-bodied, beautifully fresh and focused, with good acidity, it's still young, but drinking nicely. It's going to keep for another decade or more.

MULLAN ROAD CELLARS

MULLAN ROAD CELLARS	2015 RED WINE BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$48	RED	92
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The soft, sexy, decadently styled **2015 Red Wine Blend** offers loads of sweet red and black fruits, spice box, chocolate, and leafy herb aromatics. These carry to a ripe, full-bodied beauty that has sweet tannin, not a hard edge to be found, and a good finish. It's a sexpot of a wine to drink over

the coming 7-8 years. The blend is 49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, and 17% Cabernet Franc, aged 18 months in 34% new French and American oak barrels. www.mullanroadcellars.com

NO GIRLS

NO GIRLS	2015 GRENACHE LA PACIENCIA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	96
NO GIRLS	2015 SYRAH LA PACIENCIA VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	96
NO GIRLS	2015 TEMPRANILLO LA PACIENCIA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	97
NO GIRLS	2016 GRENACHE LA PACIENCIA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	91-93
NO GIRLS	2016 SYRAH LA PACIENCIA VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	95-97
NO GIRLS	2016 TEMPRANILLO LA PACIENCIA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-96

Made by Elizabeth Boucier of Cayuse (the wines are made at Cayuse), these latest releases under her No Girls label are unquestionably some of the best to date. While the wines always lean towards the more fresh, elegant end of the spectrum, they've gained depth and richness over the past handful of years. Today, they're certainly on par with anything coming out of the region.

Starting with the **2015 Grenache La Paciencia** from bottle, this brilliant wine tastes like a Chambolle-Musigny mixed with a Châteauneuf du Pape from Rayas! Strawberries, raspberry liqueur, green olive, and floral notes all flow to a medium-bodied, ethereally textured, beautiful Grenache that has plenty of intensity, yet just dances on the palate with no weight or heaviness. Enjoy this elixir over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2015 Syrah La Paciencia Vineyard** is just slightly darker in color than the Grenache (not by much) and offers more blackberry, peppery meats, ground herbs, and smoke. Beautifully textured, medium to full-bodied, seamless, and with building minerality, it's another singular wine from this estate that will continue drinking nicely for a decade.

Lastly, the **2015 Tempranillo La Paciencia** offers ample cedarwood, bloody meat, blackcurrants, and violets aromatics in a rich, full-bodied, beautifully layered package. It carries the most weight and depth of the

cuvées from Boucier, as well as tannin, yet it's already impossible to resist. Drink this beauty anytime over the coming 10-15 years.

A pretty, perfumed, complex Grenache, the **2016 Grenache La Paciencia** reveals a medium ruby color as well as juicy notes of mu berries, peppery herbs, dried earth, and savory spices. It's medium-bodied, has nicely integrated acidity, building tannin, and a clean finish. Give bottles a year or three.

The **2016 Syrah La Paciencia Vineyard** is a beauty and has a much more feminine, juicy, fresh style compared to the Cayuse and Horsepower releases. Blackberries, rose petals, spring flowers, and obvious minerality flow to a medium to full-bodied Syrah that has bright acidity, a layered, textured profile, and a clean finish. I love its freshness and purity, and it packs plenty of fruit, tannin, and texture while still just dancing on the palate. Drink this Côte Blonde-like beauty anytime over the coming 10-15 years.

Last of the barrel samples, the **2016 Tempranillo La Paciencia** offers a terrific bouquet of sweet cherries, cedary spice, chocolate, and violets. This perfectly balanced, medium to full-bodied Tempranillo has a great mid-palate, present yet sweet tannin, and no hard edges. It's going to benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and shine for a decade or more. nogirlswine.com

NORTHSTAR

NORTHSTAR	2014	SYRAH WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93
NORTHSTAR	2014	MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$41	RED	91
NORTHSTAR	2014	PREMIER MERLOT COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$85	RED	94
NORTHSTAR	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$55	RED	91

Coming all from the Watermill Estate Vineyard in the Rocks region of Walla Walla, the **2014 Syrah Walla Walla Valley** is a beauty that was brought up in 27% new French oak. Tobacco, plums, lavender and plenty of black olive tapenade emerge from the glass. Deep, rich, full-bodied and sexy on the palate, with a mouthfilling, expansive texture, it has classic Rocks character. Drink it over the coming 8-10 years.

The **2014 Merlot Columbia Valley** is a plump, forward, sexy blend of 76% Merlot and 24% Cabernet Sauvignon brought up in 38% new oak. Crème de cassis, black raspberries, vanilla-laced oak, and mulled cherry notes all give way to a plump, medium to full-bodied, rounded, undeniably delicious Merlot that will keep for 8-10 years.

The flagship Merlot is the **2014 Premier Merlot Columbia Valley**, a

blend of 82% Merlot and 18% Cabernet Sauvignon brought up in 50% new French oak. Plums, ripe black cherry, charcoal, and toasty oak notions all flow to a rich, full-bodied, impressively concentrated Merlot that has a great mid-palate (which isn't always a given with Merlot) and a big finish. It's another terrific vintage for this cuvée.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley** (100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged in 44% new French oak) has a terrific bouquet of blue fruits, tobacco leaf, damp earth, and spring flowers. It's a classic Cabernet Sauvignon from Walla Walla that has excellent purity of fruit, a medium to full-bodied, rounded texture, and rock-solid balance. It's well worth drinking and will keep for 10-15 years. www.northstarwinery.com

NOTA BENE CELLARS

NOTA BENE CELLARS	2014	SYRAH	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	RED	87
NOTA BENE CELLARS	2014	UNA NOTTE RED BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	RED	87
NOTA BENE CELLARS	2014	CABERNET FRANC	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$25	RED	89
NOTA BENE CELLARS	2014	MISCELA RED BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	RED	90
NOTA BENE CELLARS	2014	CIEL DU CHEVAL VINEYARD RED BLEND	RED MOUNTAIN	\$40	RED	91
NOTA BENE CELLARS	2014	ARIANSES VINEYARD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$30	RED	91

A blend of 98% Syrah and 2% Viognier, aged 22 months in barrel, the **2014 Syrah** is a ripe, chewy, fruit forward effort that gives up lots of smoky black fruits, medium body, and a clean finish. Drink it over the coming 3-4 years.

Based largely on Grenache, the **2014 Una Notte Red Blend** includes 14% each of Syrah and Mourvèdre, with the Grenache brought up all in stainless steel and the Syrah and Mourvèdre in barrel. Medium ruby/purple-colored with lots of currants, cherries, tapenade, and lavender aromas and flavors, it's medium-bodied, supple, and nicely textured on the palate. Drink it over the coming 3-5 years.

Damp earth, sappy flowers, and ample darker fruits emerge from the **2014 Cabernet Franc**, which is medium-bodied, fresh and lively on the palate, with present tannin and good acidity. It's a charming, earthy, enjoyable red to drink over the coming 7-8 years.

Better, the **2014 Miscela Red Blend** offers more black raspberries, spring flowers, spice, and vanilla oak aromatics, medium to full-bodied richness, and a polished, elegant, textured style. It's a good value at 25

bucks and should keep for a decade. The blend is 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Cabernet Franc, 9% Merlot, and 8% Malbec, aged 22 months in barrel.

Offering plenty of cassis, black raspberry, spicy oak and hints of crushed flowers, the **2014 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Red Blend** is also terrific. Medium to full-bodied, concentrated, and layered on the palate, with terrific purity, it's another fresh, focused, impeccably made wine from this estate that's going to evolve nicely. This cuvée is a blend of 39% Cabernet Franc, 32% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 29% Merlot, aged 22 months in barrel.

The **2014 Ariances Vineyard** checks in as a blend of 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 20% Petit Verdot, and 10% Cabernet Franc that's all from a site on the Wahluke Slope. It's the most broad and expansive in the lineup, with a charming, open style in its blackcurrants, kirsch, spice box, and dried flower aromas and flavors. It's straight-up delicious, has no hard edges, and a clean finish, all making for a terrific Washington State red to drink over the coming 7-8 years. notabenevintners.com

OWEN ROE

OWEN ROE	2016	CHARDONNAY DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$48	WHITE	91
OWEN ROE	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$72	RED	92
OWEN ROE	2015	YAKIMA VALLEY RED WINE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$28	RED	90
OWEN ROE	2015	SYRAH CHAPEL BLOCK	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$55	RED	94
OWEN ROE	2016	SINISTER HAND	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$28	RED	87
OWEN ROE	2016	SYRAH EX UMBRIS	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$21	RED	91

The **2016 Chardonnay DuBrul Vineyard** comes from a great site on the northern edge of the Yakima Valley and was aged 9 months in 24% new French oak. It offers ripe orchard fruits, spice, and honeysuckle aromas and flavors, vibrant acidity, medium-bodied richness, and a clean, classy style ideal for drinking over the coming 4-5 years. It's another impressive Chardonnay from the 2016 vintage.

The inky colored **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon DuBrul Vineyard** from Owen Roe is 100% varietal and spent 22 months in 53% new French oak. Graphite, caramelized red and black fruits, toasted bread, dried herbs, and sweet spice notes all emerge from this sweetly fruited, supple, rounded, sexy red that has a big texture and a good finish. Up-front and ready to go, it should nevertheless keep for 10-15 years.

The **2015 Yakima Valley Red Wine** from Owen Roe is made from 36% Merlot, 32% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Malbec aged 20 months in 43% new French oak. It's a ripe, red and black fruited 2015 that has plenty of leafy herb and cedar aromatics, medium to full-bodied richness,

nicely integrated acidity, and a fresh, clean finish. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

The **2015 Syrah Chapel Block** checks in as 100% Syrah that spent 10 months in 47% new French oak. It's an incredibly classy, elegant wine that offers lots of black raspberry and blueberry fruit intermixed with notions of crushed flowers, salty minerality, lavender and hints of tapenade. With medium to full-bodied richness, beautiful purity, ultra-fine tannin, and a great finish, it's not a blockbuster but has incredible class, balance, and purity, and is a remarkable wine.

A blend of 63% Grenache, 16% each of Syrah and Mourvèdre, and 5% Cinsault, the **2016 Sinister Hand** offers pretty red fruits and savory spices in a medium-bodied, silky, polished style. It's ideal for drinking over the coming 3-4 years.

I loved the **2016 Syrah Ex Umbris**, which is 100% varietal that spent 16 months in mostly neutral barrels. Ripe, sexy, yet pure and luscious, with full-bodied notes of black and blue fruits, leafy herbs, and violets, it's already impossible to resist, and is a [smoking value](http://www.owenroe.com). www.owenroe.com

PASSING TIME

PASSING TIME	2015	COLUMBIA VALLEY RED CUVÉE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$50	RED	94
PASSING TIME	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON WW	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$80	RED	97
PASSING TIME	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HHH	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$80	RED	97
PASSING TIME	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RM	RED MOUNTAIN	\$80	RED	95+
PASSING TIME	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA	NA	RED	93-95

PASSING TIME	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	94-96
PASSING TIME	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	NA	RED	95-97
PASSING TIME	2016	COLUMBIA VALLEY RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	94-96

A collaboration between Football Stars Dan Marino and Damon Huard, with the wines made by Chris Peterson (of Avennia), Passing Time releases four Cabernet Sauvignon dominated cuvées, each from a specific Washington State appellation. All four are brilliant wines that check-in near the top of the vintage.

The base **2015 Columbia Valley Red Cuvée** is a blend of 78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, and 8% Cabernet Franc. It offers gorgeous notes of crème de cassis, blackberry, dried earth, spice, and chocolate, with beautifully integrated oak. Rich, full-bodied, pure and elegant, it's one hell of an entry level cuvée.

From a site in the Walla Walla Valley, the 100% Cabernet Sauvignon **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon WW** spent 20 months in 60% new French oak. It offers terrific complexity in its blackcurrant, tobacco, damp earth, and chocolaty spice aromas and flavors. Deep, broad, and expansive, it's a silky, pure, awesomely balanced 2015 that's the finest vintage of this cuvée to date.

From the Champoux and Discovery Vineyards in the cooler Horse Heaven Hills region of Washington, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon HHH** checks in as 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot and the balance Cabernet Franc that was aged 20 months in 80% new French oak. With a deep, inky purple/blue color and smoking good notes of black fruits, charred earth, graphite, and chocolate, this beauty is full-bodied, incredibly balanced, with silky tannin, and a huge finish. It's an awesome wine.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon RM** (there's 3% Cabernet Franc in the blend) offers both red and black fruits as well as classic Red Mountain notes of dried earth, liquid violets, and crushed rocks. Showing more blue fruits with time in the glass, it's full-bodied, fresh and nicely focused on the palate, with

ripe, yet present tannin, and a great finish. Slightly tighter and more backward than the other two appellations, give it a year or two.

The **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley** checks in as 96% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Merlot that will see roughly 60% new French oak. Graphite, blackcurrants, crushed rocks, violets, and tons of spice characteristics emerge from this medium to full-bodied, supple, elegant red that has building tannins and a great finish.

A blend of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain** offers a rocking nose of pure black fruits as well as loads of graphite, liquid flowers, and liquid rock. Deep, inky, rich, and full-bodied, with beautiful depth of fruit, as well as plenty of tannins, it shines for its purity, balance, and length, but is going to benefit from short-term cellaring.

Including slightly more Cabernet Sauvignon than last year, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Horse Heaven Hills** is 89% Cabernet Sauvignon from Champoux Vineyard, 7% Merlot from Klipsun, and the rest Cabernet Franc from Champoux. The most rich, decadent, and opulent, with killer notes of black currants, black raspberries, crème de cassis, tobacco leaf, sandalwood, and spring flowers, it's a big, rich, decadent beauty that has building tannin, beautiful sweetness of fruit, and a great finish. I expect this to fill out in bottle and it's going to keep for two decades. Bravo.

A blend of 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, 12% Petit Verdot, and the rest Cabernet Franc, the **2016 Columbia Valley Red Wine** is another beauty, and it certainly stands up nicely to the regional appellation wines. Blackcurrants, graphite, tobacco leaf, and a kiss of tapenade give way to a full-bodied, concentrated, ripe, beautifully, layered effort.

PEARL AND STONE WINE CO.

PEARL AND STONE WINE CO.	2015	MAILBOX PEAK	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$34	RED	90
PEARL AND STONE WINE CO.	2015	CABERNET FRANC RESERVE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$45	RED	92
PEARL AND STONE WINE CO.	2015	WANDERING	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$29	RED	91
PEARL AND STONE WINE CO.	2015	RESOLUTION PEAKS	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$39	RED	92

Winemaker Chris Stone continues to grow his Pearl and Stone Wine Company label and today releases four separate cuvées.

A blend of 45% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Franc, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2015 Mailbox Peak** offers a lifted, perfumed bouquet of black cherries, plum, incense, violets, and graphite. With some detracting volatile acidity, it's nevertheless ripe and sexy on the palate, with a juicy, lip-smacking style. It'd drink bottles over the coming 5-6 years.

Made from 100% Cabernet Franc, the **2015 Cabernet Franc Reserve** sports an inky color as well as a great nose of ripe black currants, leafy herbs, tobacco, and spring flowers. Showing more blue fruits with time in the glass, this ripe, full-bodied puppy has nicely integrated acidity, loads of ripe fruit, and building tannin.

It's going to benefit from a year or two and drink nicely for a decade.

There are 150 cases of the **2015 Wandering** which is made from 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, and 27% Merlot. It's a ripe, hedonistic, heady beauty loaded with notions of red and black fruits, mulling spices, vanilla bean, and incense. Deep, full-bodied and expansive, with sweet tannin, drink it anytime over the coming 4-6 years.

A Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated blend that includes 12% Cabernet Franc and 3% Merlot, the **2015 Resolution Peaks** is another inky colored effort offering exotic notes of plums, black raspberries, violets, and candied orange peel. Ripe, rounded, expansive and downright sexy, drink it over the coming 4-6 years. 200 cases. www.pearlandstonewine.com

PEPPER BRIDGE WINERY

PEPPER BRIDGE WINERY	2015	PEPPER BRIDGE SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93
PEPPER BRIDGE WINERY	2015	TRINE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$65	RED	95
PEPPER BRIDGE WINERY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	92

Winemaker Chris Stone continues to grow his Pearl and Stone Wine Company label and today releases four separate cuvées.

A blend of 45% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Franc, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2015 Mailbox Peak** offers a lifted, perfumed bouquet of black cherries, plum, incense, violets, and graphite. With some detracting volatile acidity, it's nevertheless ripe and sexy on the palate, with a juicy, lip-smacking style. It'd drink bottles over the coming 5-6 years.

Made from 100% Cabernet Franc, the **2015 Cabernet Franc Reserve** sports an inky color as well as a great nose of ripe black currants, leafy herbs, tobacco, and spring flowers. Showing more blue fruits with time in the glass, this ripe, full-bodied puppy has nicely integrated acidity, loads of ripe fruit, and building

tannin. It's going to benefit from a year or two and drink nicely for a decade.

There are 150 cases of the **2015 Wandering** which is made from 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Cabernet Franc, and 27% Merlot. It's a ripe, hedonistic, heady beauty loaded with notions of red and black fruits, mulling spices, vanilla bean, and incense. Deep, full-bodied and expansive, with sweet tannin, drink it anytime over the coming 4-6 years.

A Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated blend that includes 12% Cabernet Franc and 3% Merlot, the **2015 Resolution Peaks** is another inky colored effort offering exotic notes of plums, black raspberries, violets, and candied orange peel. Ripe, rounded, expansive and downright sexy, drink it over the coming 4-6 years. 200 cases. www.pearlandstonewine.com

POLLARD

POLLARD	2016	CABERNET FRANC	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$35	RED	93
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I continue to love the wine from Robin Pollard, who previously spent six years as the executive director of the Washington State Wine Commission. Deciding to make the transition from promoting wine to making it, she planted a 10-acre vineyard in the Rattlesnake Hills AVA in 2014 to a mix of Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. This 2016 is the finest wine I've tasted from her and I expect the best is yet to come. In addition,

she's also an incredible coffee blender (<https://pollardcoffee.com>).

Brought up in 20% new French oak, the **2016 Cabernet Franc** from winemaker Robin Pollard offers terrific notes of black raspberries and black currants intermixed with lots of spice, dried flowers, and even some background meatiness. Medium to full-bodied, silky and polished, with fine tannin, it's beautifully balanced and well worth checking out.

PROPER WINES

PROPER WINES	2015	SYRAH PROPER ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$48	RED	94
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Made by Sean Boyd and from 100% Syrah (from the estate vineyard in the Rocks region of Walla Walla) brought up in 18% new French oak, the **2015 Syrah Proper Estate** is another inky colored Syrah from this vintage that has a terrific bouquet of

blackcurrant, olive tapenade, lavender, and pepper. It's rich, full-bodied, opulent, and sexy on the palate, with a sweet, expansive texture, no hard edges, and a rocking finish. Count me in as a fan. It's going to keep for 7-8 years. www.properwines.com

PURSUED BY BEAR

PURSUED BY BEAR	2014	BABY BEAR SYRAH	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	94
PURSUED BY BEAR	2014	PURSUED BY BEAR CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$85	RED	90+

Don't let the whimsical names fool you, these are serious wines.

The **2014 Baby Bear Syrah** is 100% Syrah that spent 32 months in 60% new French oak. It has plenty of creamy oak as well as rich, beautifully pure notes of crème de cassis, crushed flowers, spice, and vanilla bean. With a full-bodied, rich, beautifully concentrated style on the palate, it's certainly modern, yet just sings with its purity and elegance.

Aged 32 months in new barrels, the **2014 Pursued by Bear Cabernet**

Sauvignon has a lot of oak in its buttered popcorn, vanilla, and caramelized red and black fruit-driven aromatics yet shows a beautiful voluptuousness and seamless texture on the palate that gives me hope for where it is headed. Full-bodied, seductive, and concentrated, yet with its obnoxious oak always beating you on the head, give bottles 2-3 years, at which point it will be clear where this is going. www.pursuedbybearwine.com

QUINTA ESSENTIA WINERY

QUINTA ESSENTIA WINERY	2015	CHENIN BLANC	SOUTH AFRICA	NA	WHITE	91
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The **2015 Chenin Blanc** (100% Varietal) comes from a joint venture with Wendy Applebaum and Carl VanderMerwe, who makes the wine. Notes of lemon curd, honeysuckle, melon, and liquid rocks all emerge from this rich,

concentrated, textured yet fresh white that has a unique, interesting, and lengthy style. Clean, crisp, and dry on the palate, it will be versatile on the dinner table.

QUILCEDA CREEK

QUILCEDA CREEK	2015	CVR COLUMBIA VALLEY RED WINE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$70	RED	93
QUILCEDA CREEK	2015	PALENGAT	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$95	RED	97
QUILCEDA CREEK	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$200	RED	99
QUILCEDA CREEK	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON GALITZINE VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	\$140	RED	98+

I wasn't able to taste the 2016s from Snohomish, WA based Quilceda Creek, but their 2015s are serious, sexy, opulent wines that check-in near the top of the vintage.

The **2015 CVR Columbia Valley Red Wine** checks in as a blend of 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. It's a great introduction to the estate and offers a creamy, full-bodied, elegant, seamless style that just begs to be drunk. Crème de cassis, kirsch, violets, and incense notes all emerge from this sweetly fruited, pretty, elegant red that has inhaled bly sweet tannin.

The **2015 Palengat** is a Cabernet Sauvignon-heavy blend that includes 13% Merlot and 6% Cabernet Franc. This gorgeous red offers a deep, rich, opulent style in its blackcurrants, baking spice, tobacco leaf, and graphite aromas and flavors. Possessing beautiful purity, ultra-fine tannin, a big, rich, concentrated style that somehow stays light and graceful, it's a sensational, elegant wine that will keep for 15-20 years.

The flagship is the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon**, 100% Cabernet Sauvignon mostly from Champoux with the balance from Palengat and Wallula vineyards. Crème de cassis, graphite, black licorice, unsmoked tobacco, and hints of chocolate and emerge from this beauty and it continues to gain depth and nuance with time in the glass. Full-bodied, deep, and layered with an incredible purity and elegance on the palate, it's already accessible but has more than enough tannin, depth, and balance to evolve for two decades or more.

Coming all from Red Mountain and 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Galitzine Vineyard** spent 21 months in all new French oak. Deep inky plum/purple-colored with a huge nose of blackcurrants, singed herbs, black licorice, and scorched earth, this beast of a Washington State Cabernet has building tannin, a huge mid-palate, and a great, great finish. It needs to be forgotten for 3-4 years but will keep for 2-3 decades. quilcedacreek.com

RESULT OF A CRUSH

RESULT OF A CRUSH	2016	WHITE BLEND	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	90
RESULT OF A CRUSH	2015	CHRISTMAS CUVÉE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$25	RED	90
RESULT OF A CRUSH	2015	RED BLEND	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$30	RED	89

Sourced all from Walla Walla fruit, the **2016 White Blend** (45% Grenache, 33% Marsanne, and 22% Viognier) sports a lighter gold color to go with lots of juicy citrus and tropical fruits, hints of butter, and spice, medium-bodied richness, and a clean, balanced style. It's a total charmer and well worth drinking.

Moving to the reds and made from 100% Syrah, the **2015 Christmas Cuvée** tastes like a solid Côte Rôtie and offers lovely red and black raspberry fruits, pepper, crushed flowers, and hints of bacon fat. It's

medium-bodied, supple, and silky on the palate, with a forward, delicious style. It's a great value to drink over the coming 2-3 years.

The **2015 Red Blend** checks in as a mix of 80% Syrah and 20% Grenache, all from the Walla Walla Valley. Slightly lighter in color than the Christmas Cuvée, it gives up plenty of spicy red fruits, underbrush, game, and pepper as well as a medium-bodied, silky, elegant style on the palate. It's an undeniably delicious, balanced, high quality wine to drink in its youth. resultofacrush.com

REVELRY VINTNERS

REVELRY VINTNERS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON D11	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$60	RED	90
REVELRY VINTNERS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$52	RED	90
REVELRY VINTNERS	2015	GRENAÇHE	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$58	RED	90
REVELRY VINTNERS	2015	RANGE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$40	RED	89
REVELRY VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH BLOCK 19	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$56	RED	91
REVELRY VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH BLOCK 18	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$56	RED	93

Revelry Vintners' **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon D11** spent 21 months in 56% new French oak. It has a classic Washington state Cabernet nose of plums, scorched earth, chocolate, and leafy herbs, medium to full-bodied richness, nicely integrated acidity, and a good finish. It's a solid, outstanding wine to enjoy over the coming decade.

Also all Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain** spent a whopping 34 months in French oak before being bottled. It offers a rounded, expressive bouquet of mulled currants, Asian spices, licorice, and hints of toasty oak, medium to full-bodied, richness, a ripe, sexy texture, and a good finish. It's certainly ready to go but I suspect it's incredibly stable after spending close to three years in oak. It's going to keep for 10-15 years.

Revelry's **2015 Grenache** checks in as 100% Grenache sourced all from the Horse Heaven Hills AVA. It offers a ripe, sweetly fruited, sexy style as well as notions of plums, blueberries, strawberries and herbes de Provence. It's a charming, supple, elegant effort to drink over the coming

4-5 years.

The **2015 Range** checks in as 67% Syrah and 33% Grenache that was brought up all in neutral oak. Coming from sites in the Columbia Valley, its deeper ruby color is followed by lots of black raspberries, spice, vanilla, and white pepper-like aromas and flavors. It's a charming, forward, sweetly fruited effort geared for near-term drinking.

All from the Weinbau Vineyard on the Wahluke Slope, the 100% Syrah **2015 Syrah Block 19** spent 22 months in 35% new French oak. Cassis, black raspberries, vanilla spice, and hints of graphite all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, creamy, pure, polished red.

The **2015 Syrah Block 18** is another Weinbau Syrah that was brought up all in neutral oak. It's similarly colored to the Block 19 but offers a more open, rounded, savory style with notes of blackcurrants, black cherries, dried earth, flowers and ground pepper. It's broad, expansive, and balanced, and is going to continue drink nicely for 7-8 years. revelryvintners.com

REYNVAAN FAMILY VINEYARDS

REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2016	GRENACHE BLANC IN THE ROCKS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	WHITE	91
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2016	VIIGNIER IN THE ROCKS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	WHITE	93
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2015	SYRAH STONESSENCE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$100	RED	96
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2015	SYRAH THE CONTENDER	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$85	RED	93
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2015	SYRAH IN THE ROCKS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$85	RED	91
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2015	SYRAH FOOTHILLS RESERVE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	RED	95
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2015	SYRAH IN THE HILLS	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	RED	95
REYNVAAN FAMILY VYDS.	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON THE CLASSIC	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	RED	

I've struggled with Matt's whites over the past few vintages, but these 2016s are beautiful. The 2016 Grenache Blanc In The Rocks has a light gold color as well as terrific notes of buttered citrus, lemon curd, and white flowers. It's rich, has plenty of texture, and a clean, dry finish. It's going to shine on the dinner table.

The 2016 Viognier In The Rocks is another rocking effort. Reminding me of a top Condrieu, it boasts loads of ripe peach, apricot, exotic flowers, and tropical notes in its rich, medium-bodied, balanced package. It picks up some salty minerality on the finish and is another white from this team that's going to shine on the dinner table.

The most expensive Syrah from Matt is the 2015 Syrah Stonessence and there's a scant 325 cases made. Its deep ruby/plum color is followed by a salty, bloody Syrah that has loads of complexity, full-bodied richness, sweet tannin, and a big finish. Black raspberries, peppery herbs, dry aged beef, and hints of lavender all emerge from the glass and while it's already singing, it's going to evolve gracefully for 10-15 years.

A blend of 94% Syrah and 6% co-fermented Viognier, the 2015 Syrah The Contender offers more black fruits, black cherries, smoked herbs, and minerality, and it's medium to full-bodied, beautifully textured and elegant on the palate. It picks up depth and richness with time in the glass, and moderate acidity, and polished tannin. I suspect it will gain a touch more depth with a year or two in bottle and drink nicely for a decade. 525 cases.

The same blend as The Contender and 94% Syrah and 6% co-fermented

Viognier, the 2015 Syrah In The Rocks has a pretty, medium-bodied, elegant style to go complex notes of red and black raspberries, peppered meats, and crushed flowers. It lacks a touch of mid-palate depth but is silky, seamless and incredibly polished, and a joy to drink. It should keep for 7-8 years.

The 2015 Foothills Reserve is 100% Syrah from the estate vineyard located around the winery. It's one of the more tight and reserved in the lineup, yet has tons of potential. Ripe red and black fruits, spice, smoked game, tapenade, and peppery notes all emerge from this full-bodied, rich, concentrated Syrah that has sweet tannin and moderate acidity. Give it a year or two and enjoy over the following decade.

The 2015 In The Hills is another 100% Syrah and it's one of the larger production releases, with 600 cases made. Deep ruby/plum colored with notes of blackcurrants, scorched earth, tobacco, and pepper, this beauty hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, plenty of amplitude and depth, and a big finish that makes you salivate. It's a complex, ripe, sexy wine from this estate to drink over the coming decade.

The 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from the estate, the 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon The Classic has a touch of Pauillac like lead pencil and graphite to go with plenty of ripe black currant fruit, tobacco leaf, and underbrush aromas and flavors. This medium to full-bodied, ripe, seamless Cabernet has sweet tannin, moderate acidity, and an already impressive character. Drink it anytime over the coming decade. www.reynvaanfamilyvineyards.com

ROBERT KARL CELLARS

ROBERT KARL CELLARS	2014	INSPIRATION RESERVE RED WINE	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$45	RED	82
ROBERT KARL CELLARS	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON GUNSELMAN BENCH VYD.	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$36	RED	80
ROBERT KARL CELLARS	2015	CABERNET FRANC HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$26	RED	82
ROBERT KARL CELLARS	2015	MALBEC HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$26	RED	79
ROBERT KARL CELLARS	2015	CLARET HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$22	RED	83
ROBERT KARL CELLARS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$32	RED	86

I have no idea what's going on with these latest releases from Joe Gunselman's Robert Karl Cellars, but these all showed obnoxious oak and charred aromas and flavors.

Checking in as a blend of 78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec, and the rest Petit Verdot aged 21 months in 90% new French oak, the 2014 Inspiration Reserve Red Wine sports a deep purple color to go with over-oaked black fruits, charcoal, and graphite aromas and flavors. The oak profile dominates and there's a charred, unappealing aspect that takes away from what would be a high-quality wine.

The 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Gunselman Bench Vineyard (100% Cabernet Sauvignon) has a similar issue with horrr ble, unintegrated oak. Black fruits, vanilla, charred wood, and graphite notes all emerge from this medium-bodied effort that would be so much better if it was aged in different barrels.

The 2015 Cabernet Franc Horse Heaven Hills (100% varietal) offers

plenty of smoky blackberries and blueberry fruits as well as vanilla bean and charred oak. As with too many of the wines from this estate, the charred oak component detracts from what would be a fruit-forward, enjoyable wine.

The inky colored 2015 Malbec Horse Heaven Hills is another blue-fruited, charred oak, and vanilla scented effort best avoided.

A larger production cuvée, the 2015 Claret Horse Heaven Hills offers a similar oaky, vanilla, charred character, yet has an attractive, supple, rounded texture that offers some enjoyment.

The best in the lineup is the 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Horse Heaven Hills, which offers impressive amount of black and blue fruits, with subtle, integrated charred oak, violets, and vanilla nuances. Full-bodied, nicely balanced on the palate, and textured, it's about the only one worth drinking. I've no idea what's going on with this estate as they produced high-quality wines in the past. www.robertkarl.com

ROCKY POND WINERY

ROCKY POND WINERY	2015	MALBEC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$42	RED	84
ROCKY POND WINERY	2015	LA DOMESTIQUE RESERVE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$44	RED	87
ROCKY POND WINERY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$53	RED	90
ROCKY POND WINERY	2015	SYRAH DOUBLE D VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$39	RED	89
ROCKY POND WINERY	2016	STRATASTONE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	89

Inky blue/purple-colored, the 2015 Malbec offers lots of blueberries, menthol, passion fruit and incense notes in a rich, full-bodied, slightly cloying style. Drink up.

The 2015 La Domestique Reserve (75% Merlot and 25% Cabernet Sauvignon) is also deeply colored. Black cherries, black raspberries, violets, Asian spices and leafy herb notes all emerge from this rounded, supple red that has an oaky, chunky bouquet but is surprisingly silky and polished on the palate. Drink it over the coming 5-7 years.

The most expensive release is the 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon, which is 100% Cabernet aged 13 months in new French oak. This deep ruby/purple-colored effort offers lots of ripe cassis and blueberry fruits, notes of incense, spice, and cedar, full-bodied, richness, and a luscious,

silky, sexy style on the palate. It's sweet fruited and ready to go, yet should keep for a decade.

Brought up in equal parts French and American oak, the 2015 Syrah Double D Vineyard is inky colored and offers modern notes of plums, blueberries, spicy oak, and graphite. With lots of obvious oak, medium to full-bodied richness, terrific purity of fruit, and fine tannin, it's an impressive, borderline outstanding Syrah to drink over the coming 5-6 years.

Dried currants, black cherries, spice box and herbes de Provence notes all emerge from the 2016 Stratastone, which is nicely balanced, medium-bodied, and savory on the palate, with a good finish. It has considerable charm and character, and is ideal for drinking over the coming 4-5 years. www.rockypondwinery.com

SEVEN HILLS WINERY

SEVEN HILLS WINERY	2015	MERLOT SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$45	RED	90
SEVEN HILLS WINERY	2015	PENTAD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	RED	93
SEVEN HILLS WINERY	2015	WALLA WALLA VALLEY RED WINE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$35	RED	87
SEVEN HILLS WINERY	2015	CIEL DU CHEVAL VINEYARD RED WINE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$55	RED	90
SEVEN HILLS WINERY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON SEVEN HILLS VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	88
SEVEN HILLS WINERY	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON KLIPSUN VINEYARD	RED MOUNTAIN	\$50	RED	90

The Merlot-dominated **2015 Merlot Seven Hills Vineyard** is solid, with lots of blueberry fruits, notes of spice, graphite, and chocolate, medium to full-bodied richness, and sweet tannin. It's deliciously gulpable, nicely balanced, and is a rock-solid wine. The blend is 89% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Cabernet Franc, all brought up in 40% new French oak.

The tiny production **2015 Pentad** checks in as 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Petit Verdot, and the rest Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Carmenère. Like most 2015s, it sports a deep, inky, saturated color as well as a rocking bouquet of mulled blackcurrants, blackberries, tobacco leaf, crushed rocks, and leafy herbs. Rich, full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, and with a building sense of minerality, drink this pure, balanced, 2015 anytime over the coming 10-15 years. It's the finest vintage of this cuvée I've tasted.

The **2015 Walla Walla Valley Red Wine** (71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% each of Merlot and Malbec, and the rest Petit Verdot) offers lots of plum and blackberry fruit, with a super-ripe, chocolatey style. It comes up short on finesse and elegance but is a charming, enjoyable red.

The **2015 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Red Wine** is made from 41% Cabernet Sauvignon, 36% Merlot, 13% Petit Verdot, and 10% Cabernet Franc that spent 22 months in 40% new French oak. It's a tiny production cuvée from a great site in Red Mountain, and its inky purple color is followed by another super-ripe, rich, blue-fruited, spicy red that has plenty of fine tannins and a good finish. Drink it over the coming decade.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Seven Hills Vineyard** (there's 2% Petit Verdot in the blend) is another super-ripe, blueberry, spicy oak, chocolate and dried herb-scented effort. It's ripe, rounded and sexy on the palate, but it tastes like all the other cuvées here.

I found most of these latest releases from Seven Hills Winery to taste almost identical. Blueberries, violets, spice and incense notes all emerge from the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Klipsun Vineyard**. These give way to a medium to full-bodied, sweetly fruited, silky wine that has some obvious vanilla oak, yet certainly offers plenty of pleasure. www.sevenhillswinery.com

SHERIDAN VINEYARD

SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2016	CHARDONNAY LA BELLE BLONDE	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	WHITE	88
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	90
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2016	MYSTIQUE	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	92
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2015	SYRAH SINGULARITY	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	95
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2015	L'ORAGE	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2015	CABERNET FRANC BOSS BLOCK	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2015	BLOCK 1	YAKIMA VALLEY	NA	RED	96+
SHERIDAN VINEYARD	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY	NAPA VALLEY	NA	RED	90

Looking first at the Chardonnay from winemaker Scott Greer, the **2016 La Belle Blonde** offers medium gold color as well as a rich, ripe, pedal to the metal style in its buttered peach, ripe pineapple, and spicy, buttery aromas and flavors. It stays clean and balanced on the palate, with nicely integrated acidity and classic, dry finish. I suspect it's best enjoyed over the coming year or three.

Always a good value, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon** offers lots of Cabernet character in its blackcurrant, lead pencil, green tobacco, and spicy oak aromas and flavors. It's medium to full-bodied, sweetly fruited, balanced, and already a joy to drink.

From another great vintage for Washington State, the Bordeaux look-alike **2016 Mystique** is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc that's all from the estate vineyard on the western edge of the Yakima Valley. Its deep ruby color is followed by a spicy, savory, herbal, yet textured and full-bodied red that has loads of red and black fruits, some spicy oak, and a clean, dry finish. It's already impossible to resist yet should keep for 7-8 years.

The **2015 Syrah Singularity** is another terrific vintage for this cuvée, one which always reminds me of a top Cote Rotie (or Hermitage?) with its savory, rich, meaty style. The 2015 sports a deep ruby/plum color to go with a big bouquet of blackcurrants, smoked meats, graphite, and hints of black olive tapenade. With medium to full-bodied richness, ripe, polished tannin, and a great finish, it checks in slightly behind the crazy good 2013 (and 2014), but blossoms with time in the glass and has a solid decade of prime drinking ahead of it.

The Cabernet Sauvignon dominated (there's a small amount of Cabernet Franc) **2015 L'Orange** is another brilliant wine from this estate. Dried red

currants, cedarwood, incense and lead pencil notes all flow to a ripe, sexy, medium to full-bodied Cabernet that has sweet tannin, impeccable balance, and a great finish. Drink this pleasure-bent beauty anytime over the coming decade.

Always from 100% Cabernet Franc, from a single block in the Sheridan Vineyard, the **2015 Cabernet Franc Boss Block** offers a rich, savory style in its black and red currant fruits, dried underbrush, cedar pencil and graphite aromatics. This flow to a full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, ripe wine that has a beautiful core of sweet fruit, ripe, polished tannin, and a great finish. It needs 3-4 years of bottle age to develop more complexity but is a beautifully balanced wine well worth seeking out.

The Cabernet Sauvignon dominated **2015 Block 1** is another sensational effort from winemaker Scott Greer. Brought up in 100% new barrels and hitting 14.1% natural alcohol, it offers up a heavenly perfume of crème de cassis, spicy oak, graphite, and tobacco. This gives way to a ripe, concentrated, plush Cabernet that has sweet tannin, a big, opulent texture, good acidity, and a great finish. It's approachable today with a decant, but will be better in 2-3 years and keep for 15-20 years.

In addition to his Washington State releases, Scott releases a terrific Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. The deep ruby/purple-tinged **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley** offers classic Cabernet notes of blackcurrants, cedarwood, lead pencil, and dried tobacco to go with a medium-bodied, silky, beautifully textured style on the palate that hides substantial tannin. Drink this savory, Bordeaux look-like anytime over the coming decade or more. www.sheridanvineyard.com

SIXTO

SIXTO	2015	CHARDONNAY UNCOVERED	WASHINGTON STATE	NA	WHITE	93
SIXTO	2015	CHARDONNAY FRENCHMAN HILLS	WASHINGTON STATE	NA	WHITE	93
SIXTO	2015	CHARDONNAY MOXEE	WASHINGTON STATE	NA	WHITE	94
SIXTO	2015	CHARDONNAY ROZA HILLS	WASHINGTON STATE	NA	WHITE	94

Made by Brennon Leighton and Charles Smith, Sixto focuses on cooler, higher elevation vineyards and old vines. They're consistently some of the finest Chardonnays produced in the State.

A blend of multiple vineyards (this is the only blend in the Sixto lineup), the **2015 Chardonnay Uncovered** is brought up in a mix of concrete and puncheons before spending 18 months in barrel. Buttered pineapple, white flowers, brioche, and some seriously ripe fruit emerge from the glass, and it's medium to full-bodied, beautifully concentrated and textured, with a terrific depth of fruit. It's impressive and showed even more freshness and purity with time in the glass.

The **2015 Chardonnay Frenchman Hills** offers a similar rich, ripe, sexy style, with a touch more minerality as well as toasted nut notions. Deep,

rich, concentrated, and opulent, yet always with a fresh style, it's another ripe, toasty, rich Chardonnay to drink over the coming 2-3 years.

The **2015 Chardonnay Moxee** comes from a western slope at 1,550 feet in elevation and limestone soils. This gorgeous effort has a terrific perfume of ripe, pure pineapple and buttered lemon fruit as well as medium to full-bodied richness, a distinct minerality, and a creamy, layered texture. I love its vibrancy, but make no mistake, this is another rich, creamy, classy Chardonnay from this team.

From the lowest elevation site and chaky soils (1,300 feet), the **2015 Chardonnay Roza Hills** offers more minerality as well as caramelized currants, brioche, and toasted bread. With terrific richness, integrated acidity, and a great finish, it will keep for 3-5 years.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	RIESLING MAGICIAN	ANCIENT LAKES	\$18	WHITE	91
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	CHARDONNAY ENCHANTRESS	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$28	WHITE	88
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2015	ARCHIMAGE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$52	RED	94
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ILLUSIONIST	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$52	RED	94
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ILLUSIONIST	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$52	RED	92-95
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	ARCHIMAGE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$52	RED	92-94
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	SPELLBINDER	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$20	RED	91
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	CONJURER RED BLEND	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$28	RED	92
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	GRENACHE SORCERESS	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	RED	90-92
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	SYRAH ZIGGY STARDUST	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	89-91
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	SYRAH PSYCHEDELIC	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	93-95+
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	SYRAH FUNKADELIC	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$60	RED	95-97
SLEIGHT OF HAND	2016	SYRAH LEVITATION	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$45	RED	92-94

This was another great lineup from the Walla Walla based team of Trey Busch, Jerry Solomon, and Keith Johnson.

The **2016 Riesling Magician** is a beauty. Lychee, green citrus, spice, and a hint of minerality all emerge from this medium-bodied, balanced, refreshing, clean, off-dry white that's seriously impressive.

The **2016 Chardonnay Enchantress** comes from the Frenchman Hills Vineyard in the Yakima Valley and was aged 11 months in neutral barrels and concrete tanks. Clean apple, citrus blossom, and hints of mint all give way to a medium-bodied, nicely balanced, enjoyable white that's going to continue drinking nicely for 2-3 years.

The **2015 Archimage** checks in as a blend of 57% Cabernet Franc and 43% Merlot that spent 20 months in 40% new French oak. This deep ruby/purple-colored effort offers a rocking bouquet of blackcurrants, smoked tobacco leaf, cured meats, and assorted leafy herbs. It's rich, full-bodied, beautifully layered and textured, and expands on the palate, with sweet tannin. It's a terrific Bordeaux blend from this team.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Illusionist** (there's 10% Cabernet Franc and 5% Petit Verdot) spent 20 months in 65% new French oak. It offers a more classic Cabernet Sauvignon bouquet of crème de cassis, tobacco, damp earth and chocolate. As with the Archimage, it's full-bodied, rich, and concentrated, with sweet tannin, and is going to drink nicely for a decade or more.

Blueberries, cassis, lead pencil and hints of graphite all emerge from the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Illusionist**, which is beautifully layered, silky and pure on the palate. With medium to full-bodied richness, ultra-fine tannin, and a great finish, it's another terrific wine from Trey. Drink it over the coming decade or more. The blend is 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Cabernet Franc and the rest Petit Verdot, all aged 20 months in 64% new French oak.

The **2016 Archimage** checks in as a blend of 50% Cabernet Franc, 47% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Sauvignon, brought up in 44% new French oak. Deep ruby/purple-colored with gorgeous notes of blackberries, leafy herbs, and exotic flowers, as well as just a hint of background oak, this beauty is full-bodied, concentrated, and elegant on the palate, with great tannin. It's another

wine that's going to age gracefully.

The **2016 Spellbinder** is a value-priced blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Cabernet Franc and the rest Merlot. Deep ruby/purple-colored with lots of black and blue fruits, earth, and gravelly minerality, it has terrific depth of fruit, no hard edges, and solid overall freshness and purity.

The **2016 Conjurer Red Blend** is a blend of 43% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Cabernet Franc, 22% Merlot, and the balance Petit Verdot. It has beautiful polish and elegance as well as lovely black and blue fruits, medium to full body, integrated acidity, and a clean, pure, seamless style. It's a smoking value that will keep for 7-8 years.

An outstanding Grenache in the making, the **2016 Grenache Sorceress** from Trey offers a pale ruby color as well beautiful kirsch and cherry fruits, medium-bodied richness, lots of spice and floral nuances, and a great finish.

The **2016 Syrah Ziggy Stardust** (100% Syrah) has a very lively, juicy style. Currants, mulberries, passion fruits, spring flowers, and green herb notes all emerge from this lively, pretty, elegant Syrah that has fine tannin and a clean finish.

Coming all from the Stoney Vine Vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley and aging in 25% new French oak, the **2016 Syrah Psychedelic** is ruby/purple-colored and loaded with notions of currants, tapenade, lavender, and tobacco. It's full-bodied, deep, beautifully concentrated, and layered, with an expansive, sexy style that's hard to resist. It will keep for a decade.

The **2016 Syrah Funkadelic** all comes from the Funk Vineyard in Walla Walla and will see 20 months in neutral barrels. Deeper colored than the Psychedelic Syrah, it gives up loads of blackcurrants, tobacco, scorched earth, and chocolate. Deep, rich, multidimensional, and incredibly pure, it's a sensational Syrah that's probably the best I've tasted from this estate.

Always a good value, the **2016 Syrah Levitation** comes from a handful of vineyards in the Columbia Valley (Lewis, Collines, and Ziggy Stardust) and will see 16 months in 30% new French oak. Vibrant purple-colored with classic notes of black raspberries, cassis, toasty oak, and lead pencil, it's medium to full-bodied, has rocking purity of fruit, fine tannin, and notable purity and freshness. www.sofhcellars.com

SMASNE CELLARS

SMASNE CELLARS	2016	MARSANNE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$22	WHITE	89
SMASNE CELLARS	2013	CABERNET SAUVIGNON OLD VINE UPLAND VINEYARD	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$60	RED	92
SMASNE CELLARS	2013	OWENS RESERVE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$75	RED	91
SMASNE CELLARS	2013	MOURVÈDRE UPLAND VINEYARD	SNIPES MOUNTAIN	\$44	RED	90
SMASNE CELLARS	2013	MOURVEDRE BOUSHEY VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$48	RED	89
SMASNE CELLARS	2014	SYRAH BLOCK #4	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$44	RED	92

The **2016 Marsanne** is a rich, ripe white that gives up notes of caramelized stone fruits and buttered peach. Rich, nicely textured, and certainly opulent, it's a full-bodied white that packs a punch.

Spice, cedar, incense, black raspberry, and creamy oak are just some of the nuances in the **2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Old Vine Upland Vineyard**, which is 100% varietal aged in new French oak. Medium to full-bodied, elegant and seamless on the palate, with beautiful purity of fruit and good complexity, it should drink nicely for 10-12 years.

A blend of mostly Cabernet Sauvignon (there's a big kick of Petit Verdot as well), the **2013 Owens Reserve** offers a similar spicy, oaky, complex style to go with a big, rich, full-bodied style on the palate. Blackcurrants, Asian spice, licorice, and plummy notes all emerge from this beauty, which has a lifted, sexy, ripe style.

The 100% Mourvèdre **2013 Mourvèdre Upland Vineyard** is another ripe, sexy wine from this estate. Black raspberries, blueberries, incense, cedarwood, and spicy oak all give way to a lifted, slightly volatile yet pure, delicious wine.

From a cooler vineyard in the Yakima Valley, the 100% Mourvèdre **2013 Mourvedre Boushey Vineyard** is another deep ruby /purple-colored effort. Violets, spicy oak, plums, and ultra-ripe fruits emerge from this volatile, lifted yet still pleasurable red. The volatile acidity in all these wines is obtrusive, yet there's certainly still pleasure here.

The **2014 Syrah Block #4** (there's 5% Viognier in the blend) is one of my favorites from Robert. Black raspberries, blackberries, vanilla bean, and lead pencil notes all flow to a ripe, full-bodied, pure, downright sexy Syrah that's already hard to resist. smasnecellars.com

SPRING VALLEY VINEYARD

SPRING VALLEY VINEYARD	2014	URIAH RED WINE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	89
SPRING VALLEY VINEYARD	2014	FREDERICK RED WINE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	91

While I wasn't able to taste the 2015s from winemaker Serge Laville, his 2014s from bottle showed nicely. This is a solid estate that always makes

a classic, balanced, thoroughly enjoyable wine.

The **2014 Uriah Red Wine** (56% Merlot, 38% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit

Verdot, and 2% Malbec) offers a ruby/plum color to go with a spicy, herbal, savory bouquet of red plums, currants, savory spices, and chocolate. It's medium to full-bodied, rounded, and supple on the palate, with a charming, enjoyable style that will keep for 7-8 years.

A blend of 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 22% Cabernet Franc,

5% Petit Verdot, and 3% Malbec, the **2014 Frederick Red Wine** also offers an herbal edge yet has more purity and freshness. Blackcurrants, tobacco leaf, leafy herbs, and damp earthy notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, balanced, thoroughly enjoyable red that will continue drinking nicely for a decade or more. www.springvalleyvineyard.com

STARSIDE

STARSIDE	2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	91
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The **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon** from Starside is a classic, elegant, beautifully balanced effort that gives up textbook black and blue fruits, scorched earth, and tobacco leaf aromas and flavors. It's medium-

bodied, nicely balanced, with moderate tannin, and an already upfront, delicious style. It can be drunk today or cellared for 7-8 years.

WINES OF SUBSTANCE

WINES OF SUBSTANCE	2016 SAUVIGNON BLANC SUNSET VINEYARD	ANCIENT LAKES	\$20	WHITE	92
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WINES OF SUBSTANCE	2015 MERLOT NORTHRIDGE VINEYARD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	NA	RED	94
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WINES OF SUBSTANCE	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON STONERIDGE VINEYARD	COLUMBIA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
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WINES OF SUBSTANCE	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON POWERLINE VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
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WINES OF SUBSTANCE	2015 CABERNET SAUVIGNON JACK'S VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	NA	RED	94
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WINES OF SUBSTANCE	2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$17	RED	3
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In an attempt to simplify the K Vintners lineup, Charles Smith created the Wines of Substance label in 2017 and moved all of the Bordeaux varieties under this umbrella. As with the K Vintners wines, these are terrific wines that more than over deliver at their price point. All of the wines see small batch fermentations, native yeast, aging in barrel, and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

The **2016 Sauvignon Blanc Sunset Vineyard** is a racy, vibrant, serious Sauvignon Blanc that compete with the top wines out there. Buttered lemons, lime, and leafy green herbs all emerge from this salty, juicy, beautifully balanced effort that has real class.

Mulled spices, ripe black cherries, graphite, and hints of chocolate emerge from the **2015 Merlot Northridge Vineyard**. It's medium to full-bodied, pure, elegant and layered, with a seamless texture that continues to gain depth and richness with time in the glass. Brought up in 40% new oak, it's an elegant, gorgeous wine.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Stoneridge Vineyard** sports a medium ruby, mostly opaque color to go with classic graphite, dried earth, tobacco leaf and currant fruit. It's full-bodied, silky, pure and polished, with a hint of chocolate and oak on the finish. With a seamless texture, fine tannin and a

great, great texture, drink it over the coming 10-15 years.

Coming from mostly 169 and 2 clones of Cabernet Sauvignon, the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Powerline Vineyard** offers a deep ruby color as well as complex notes of ripe black cherries, currants, leafy herbs, and tapenade. It's rich, full-bodied, silky, and seamless, with fine, polished tannin and a great finish. Drink this complex, elegant, singular Cabernet over the coming decade or more.

Kirsch, caramelized red and black currants, spice, and cedar pencil notes all emerge from the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Jack's Vineyard**. An elegant, pretty, pure expression of the Rocks Terroir, as well as Cabernet Sauvignon, it's going to keep for a decade at least.

The largest production cuvée, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon** was vinified in tank before being pressed to barrel where it went through malo. Aged 13 months in barrels, its vibrant purple color is followed by a terrific bouquet of blueberries, cassis, scorched earth, and spice. Deep, rich, full-bodied, and beautifully balanced, this is the real deal, ladies and gentlemen, and it's a no-brainer purchase. Just pretend you paid three times the price. winesofsubstance.com

TAMARACK CELLARS

TAMARACK CELLARS	2012 CIEL DU CHEVAL VINEYARD RESERVE	RED MOUNTAIN	\$50	RED	92
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TAMARACK CELLARS	2014 SPICEBOX	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	RED	89
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TAMARACK CELLARS	2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$36	RED	90
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TAMARACK CELLARS	2015 CABERNET FRANC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	RED	90
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TAMARACK CELLARS	2015 MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$28	RED	86
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TAMARACK CELLARS	2015 FIREHOUSE RED	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$18	RED	88
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Winemaker Danny Gordon continues to release a solid lineup of both quality and value.

The **2012 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Reserve** is a big, ripe, sexy blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Cabernet Franc, and 10% Merlot. Chocolate, plum, mocha, and some oaky notes all emerge from this beauty, which has serious ripeness (a touch over-ripe), sweet tannin, and huge amounts of charm. Drink it over the coming decade.

A blend of 52% Grenache, 31% Mourvèdre, and 17% Counoise the **2014 Spicebox** is a terrific little gem of a wine that gives up tons of pleasure. Black cherries, spice box, dried herbs, and cedary spice notes all emerge from this plump, medium-bodied, rounded effort that has sweet tannin and a clean finish. Drink it over the coming 2-4 years.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon** is a deeply colored effort that has an upfront, voluptuous style in its blackcurrant and plum fruits, spice, and chocolate aromas and flavors. With medium to full-bodied richness, ripe

tannin, and a ready to go style, it's another high-quality wine from this estate to drink over the coming 5-7 years.

A 100% varietal wine, the **2015 Cabernet Franc** has a slightly brooding, backward style on the nose, yet picks up plenty of fruit and richness on the palate. With currants, spice-box and chocolate aromas and flavors, medium to full-bodied richness, sweet tannin, and an undeniably delicious style, it's a charmer that's going to dish out ample pleasure over the coming 4-6 years.

Graphite, cedarwood, black cherry, and hints of charred vanilla oak all emerge from the **2015 Merlot**, which is ripe, sweetly fruited and balanced. Drink it over the coming 2-3 years.

Always a good value, the **2015 Firehouse Red** is a plump, delicious red that sells for a song. Currants, chocolate, leafy herbs and a hint of vanilla all emerge from this medium-bodied, rounded, pleasure-bent beauty that's ideal for drinking over the coming 2-4 years. www.tamarackcellars.com

TEMPORAL VINTNERS

TEMPORAL VINTNERS	2015 TEMPRANILLO TEMPORAL	WASHINGTON	NA	RED	87
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While a far cry from the terrific 2014 (which I rated 93 points), the 2015 Tempranillo Temporal (100% Tempranillo) is still enjoyable and offers moderate depth and richness in its light cherry, dried herbs, cedar, and

spice aromas and flavors. Nicely balanced, medium-bodied, and with a good, a bit short finish, it's best enjoyed over the coming 3-4 years.

TENET WINES

TENET WINES	2015 TENET GSM	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$70	RED	94
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TENET WINES	2015 SYRAH THE PUNDIT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	RED	91
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Created in 2013, Tenet Wines is a collaboration between Chateau Ste. Michelle's head winemaker Bob Bertheau and the Rhône Valley's Michel Gassier and Philippe Cambie. There are three wines under this label: the flagship Tenet GSM blend and The Pundit Syrah, both from the Columbia

Valley in Washington, and Fervent Syrah which comes from Michel Gassier's Costières de Nîmes estate in the Southern Rhône.

Showing similar to last year, the **2015 Tenet GSM** is a terrific blend of 40% Grenache, 38% Mourvèdre, and 22% Syrah that saw one-third stems

and 13 months in larger oak. Black raspberries, blackberries, tobacco, and licorice notes all emerge from this full-bodied, supple, gorgeously layered GSM blend that has sweet tannin and a great mid-palate.

Checking in as a blend of 89% Syrah, 5% Grenache, 4% Mourvèdre, and 2% Viognier (co-fermented with Syrah), the **2015 Syrah The Pundit** spent

13 months in a mix of French and American oak. Its deep purple color is followed by terrific Syrah notes of blackberries, black olive tapenade, lavender, and pepper. It's medium to full-bodied, plump, layered and rounded, with terrific fruit and length. Drink it over the coming 4-5 years. www.tenetwines.com

TENOR WINES

TENOR WINES	2015	CHARDONNAY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$48	WHITE	93
TENOR WINES	2016	SAUVIGNON BLANC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$48	WHITE	89
TENOR WINES	2015	MALBEC	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$58	RED	89
TENOR WINES	2015	MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$58	RED	88
TENOR WINES	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$68	RED	90
TENOR WINES	2015	SYRAH	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$58	RED	93 94

The **2015 Chardonnay** from Tenor comes all from the Columbia Valley and was brought up in new French oak. Sautéed citrus, caramelized apple, and brioche notes flow to a medium-bodied, rich, toasty Chardonnay that has rock-solid mid-palate concentration, excellent purity, and a balanced, classic style. It's incredibly high quality and I suspect capable of lasting for a decade or more.

The **2016 Sauvignon Blanc** from Tenor sports a vibrant pale gold color to go with notes of lime, citrus blossom, and subtle minerality. Very clean, pure, and elegant, with a hint of grassiness, it's a beautiful white from this estate and I suspect the best I've tasted.

The **2015 Malbec** (100% Malbec aged 20 months in new French oak) offers that classic inky, almost blue color that's so common from the Malbecs in Washington. Notes of blueberries, pen ink, violets, and incense all emerge from this lifted, slightly volatile effort that improves on the palate, offering a beautiful, voluptuous, layered and sweetly fruited style.

Offering more chocolate, caramel, and oak, the **2015 Merlot** has plenty of ripe black raspberry and creamy cherry fruit, medium to full-bodied richness, and sweet tannin. It's a charming, slightly straightforward effort.

My favorite of the trio is the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon**, which is 100% varietal and spent 21 months in 67% new French oak. It avoids the volatile character found too often in these wines and offers pretty plum and blueberry fruits, spice box, hints of chocolate, and graphite to go with a juicy, medium to full-bodied, moderately tannic style on the palate. It has plenty of charm and should keep for 10-12 years.

Tapenade, smoky black fruits, pepper, and earthy notes all emerge from the **2015 Syrah**. Aged just under two years in 67% new French oak, it has plenty of background oak, is full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, and has a silky, unctuous texture. It's a beautiful, rich, layered beauty well worth checking out. www.tenorwines.com

THE ROYAL BULL

THE ROYAL BULL	2015	THE ROYAL BULL(\$#1+)	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$241	RED	93
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Made by Aryn Morell and checking in as a blend of equal parts Tempranillo and Grenache, the aggressively priced **2015 The Royal Bull(\$#1+)** was aged in 50% new French oak. It offers lots of vanilla oak intermixed with notions of black

cherries, cedary spice, dried herbs, and earth. Rich, medium to full-bodied, and elegant on the palate, it stays light and elegant, with silky tannin and no hard edges. It should drink nicely for 10-12 years. www.theroyalbull.com

THE WALLS

THE WALLS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON CURIOSITAS	RED MOUNTAIN	\$56	RED	88
THE WALLS	2015	THE RAMPARTS	RED MOUNTAIN	\$44	RED	91
THE WALLS	2015	CONCRETE MAMA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$73	RED	94
THE WALLS	2015	STANLEY GROOVY	RED MOUNTAIN	\$38	RED	90
THE WALLS	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON CURIOSITAS	RED MOUNTAIN	\$56	RED	91-93
THE WALLS	2016	CONCRETE MAMA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$73	RED	92-94
THE WALLS	2014	CONCRETE MAMA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$75	RED	92

Black cherries, violets, spring flowers, and hints of blueberries emerge from the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Curiositas**, which is medium-bodied, juicy, forward, and easygoing. This cuvée comes all from the Obelisco Vineyard on Red Mountain and spent 18 months in 60% new French oak.

The **2015 The Ramparts** from The Walls winery checks in as a mix of 52% Grenache, 32% Mourvèdre, 13% Counoise, and 3% Syrah brought up mostly in neutral oak. Kirsch, black cherries, dried flowers, and incense notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, layered, elegant red that has a seamless, silky texture. It's a high-quality Grenache from Washington that will drink nicely for 4-6 years.

The **2015 Concrete Mama** is a Syrah-dominated cuvée that includes 9% Grenache, aged 12 months in concrete tanks before being moved to 42% new oak barrels. Its deep ruby/plum color is followed by a rich, savory bouquet of currants, olive tapenade, pepper, and tobacco leaf. Rich, opulent and expansive on the palate, with a beautiful texture, it has loads of classic Rocks funk and will keep for 8-10 years.

Coming all from Red Mountain and an interesting blend of 55% Touriga Nacional, 21% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Souzao, 9% Tinta Cao, and the rest Tempranillo, the **2015 Stanley Groovy** sports a vibrant, inky color to go with interesting notes of plums, ripe cherries, leafy herbs, incense, and

graphite. With surprising elegance, medium to full-bodied richness, and nicely integrated acidity, drink this impeccably balanced, high-quality red anytime over the coming 7-8 years.

Tasted as a barrel sample, the **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Curiositas** is 100% varietal that's all from the Obelisco Vineyard on Red Mountain. Deep purple-colored with lots of blueberries, leafy herbs, graphite, and hints of minerality, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a plump, rounded, supple style, no hard edges, and beautiful purity. It's a step up over the 2015 and should drink nicely right out of the gate.

Checking in as a blend of 92% Grenache and 8% Syrah, the medium ruby/ semi-opaque colored **2016 Concrete Mama** is a ripe, sexy, exuberant Grenache that does everything right. Kirsch, dried spice, underbrush, and floral notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, supple, impressively textured beauty that has no hard edges. It's going to drink nicely right out of the gate yet keep for 7-10 years.

Made from 100% Syrah, the **2014 Concrete Mama** offers a rich, smoky, savory style in its blackcurrants, peanut, smoked herbs, chocolate, and tobacco leaf aromas and flavors. With medium to full-bodied richness, a supple, expansive texture, and decent mid-palate depth, it should drink nicely for 7-8 years. www.thewallsvineyards.com

TRANCHE

TRANCHE	2015	TRANCHE PAPE BLANC BLUE MOUNTAIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$25	WHITE	93
TRANCHE	2015	CHARDONNAY CELILO VINEYARD	COLUMBIA GORGE	\$45	WHITE	92
TRANCHE	2015	CABERNET FRANC BLUE MOUNTAIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$40	RED	92
TRANCHE	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON BLUE MOUNTAIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	92
TRANCHE	2015	TRANCHE PAPE	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$35	RED	89
TRANCHE	2015	SYRAH BLUE MOUNTAIN VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$40	RED	92

A blend of 29% Viognier, 22% Roussanne, 16% Grenache Blanc, 15% Marsanne, 10% Clairette Blanche, and 8% Picpoul Blanc, the **2015 Tranche Pape Blanc Blue Mountain Vineyard** is a smoking white that will compete with

any number of Châteauneuf du Pape Blancs! Ripe peach, pineapple, quince, brioche and toasted bread notes all give way to a medium to full-bodied, pure, elegant white that offers serious bang for the buck.

Like everything at Tranche, the **2015 Chardonnay Celilo Vineyard** is impeccably made. Clean stone fruits, apple blossom, white flowers and hints of spice all emerge from the glass, and it's medium to full-bodied, pure, elegant and seamless, with beautifully integrated acidity. This terrific white can be enjoyed today or cellared for 4-6 years.

The **2015 Cabernet Franc Blue Mountain Vineyard** from Tranche comes from a site on the northern edge of Walla Walla and was aged 22 months in neutral French oak. It's a beautiful wine that has lots of Franc character in its dark cherry and currant fruits, damp earth, chocolate, and moderately herbal bouquet. This carries to a medium to full-bodied, balanced, lively red that has impeccable balance and a clean finish. It's going to drink nicely for over a decade.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Blue Mountain Vineyard** was also brought up in neutral oak. It has classic characteristics of blackcurrants,

tobacco leaf, chocolate, and earth. With full-bodied richness, a rounded, mouthfilling texture, and sweet tannin, it's another big, rich wine from Tranche that stays balanced, drinkable, and thoroughly enjoyable.

The **2015 Tranche Pape** Columbia Valley checks in as a blend of 36% Grenache, 34% Mourvèdre and the rest Syrah. It offers a black-fruited, smoky, earthy style in its blackberry and currants fruits and is medium to full-bodied, rich, and mouthfilling. Showing more pepper and leafy herbs with time in the glass, it has solid depth of fruit and a silky texture and will keep for 7-8 years.

The **2015 Syrah Blue Mountain Vineyard** was also fermented in concrete and stainless steel and was aged 22 months in neutral French oak. It offers terrific notes of black raspberries, crème de cassis, vanilla bean, and spice in a full-bodied, ultra-pure, seamless, creamy, modern style. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years. www.tranche.wine

TWO VINTNERS

TWO VINTNERS	2014	MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$32	RED	92
TWO VINTNERS	2015	SAL	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$55	RED	92
TWO VINTNERS	2015	LEGIT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$30	RED	93
TWO VINTNERS	2015	GRENACHE CLAIRE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$40	RED	93
TWO VINTNERS	2015	CINSAULT MAKE HASTE	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$21	RED	89
TWO VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH COLUMBIA VALLEY	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$25	RED	90
TWO VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH SOME DAYS ARE STONES	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	93
TWO VINTNERS	2015	SYRAH SOME DAYS ARE DIAMONDS	HORSE HEAVEN HILLS	\$50	RED	94
TWO VINTNERS	2015	LOLA	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$30	RED	94
TWO VINTNERS	2015	ZINFANDEL	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$29	RED	90

These Two Vintners wines, made by Morgan Lee, continue to knock it out of the park. These are ripe, opulent, sexy wines that deliver tons of fruit, yet stays balanced and light on the palate. Count me in as a fan.

The **2014 Merlot**, which includes 5% each of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, sports a deep ruby/purple color as well as a great bouquet of plums, black cherries, tobacco, and graphite. This full-bodied, spicy, opulent, sexy beauty has no hard edges, a mouthfilling texture and a great finish. It's no lightweight (15.2% alcohol) but is beautifully balanced, supple, and just impossible to resist. Drink it over the coming 5-6 years.

The **2015 Sal** from Two Vintners checks in as a blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Cabernet Franc 5% Petite Verdot that's all from May's Discovery Vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills. Aged 22 months in 90% new French oak, it has a decidedly spicy, perfumed, sexy personality and gives up loads of plum, mulled cherries, spice box, and incense aromas and flavors. As with all the releases here, it's a big, rich, opulent wine that still stays balanced and light on the palate, and is a joy to drink.

The Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated **2015 Legit** is a slightly larger production cuvée (350 cases) that spent 22 months in 75% new French oak. This inky colored effort is another pedal-to-the-metal, pleasure-bent beauty boasting knockout notes of blueberries, spiced plums, licorice, and leafy herbs. Rich, full-bodied, super intense and layered, yet also balanced, drink it anytime over the coming 7-8 years.

Made from 100% Grenache brought up all in neutral oak, the **2015 Grenache Claire** sports a translucent medium ruby color as well as terrific notes of black cherry and kirsch liqueur, ground pepper, and herbes de Provence. With a hint of olive tapenade, medium to full-bodied richness, and a silky, elegant texture, it's another rocking wine from this team.

A variety you don't see stand on its own very often, the **2015 Cinsault Make Haste** sports a medium ruby/plum color as well as attractive notes of black cherries, raspberries, dried flowers, and savory earth. This beauty

has tons of character, medium-bodied richness, and a charming, sweetly fruited, unique style. Drink it over the coming couple of years.

The **2015 Syrah Columbia Valley** (100% Syrah aged 18 months in neutral oak) sports a deep purple color to go with a ripe, heady, hedonistic bouquet of plums, ground pepper, and black olives. This rich, opulent, pleasure-bent beauty delivers the goods and is perfect for near-term drinking.

From the Stoney Vine Vineyard in Walla Walla, the **2015 Syrah Some Days Are Stones** is a bigger, richer wine. Opaque purple-colored and loaded with notions of black peppery, charred meat, chocolate, and black olive, it's powerful, concentrated, and rich on the palate, without ever being heavy or over the top. It's another pleasure-bent beauty that offers serious flavor authority. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

Coming from the Discovery Vineyard in the cooler Horse Heaven Hills AVA, the **2015 Syrah Some Days Are Diamonds** offers more purity and elegance, with notes of black raspberries, cassis, crushed flowers, violets. This full-bodied, elegant, seamless beauty has nicely integrated acidity, a pure, clean texture, and a great finish. It's going to drink nicely for 7-8 years as well.

The Syrah/Cab blend of the estate is the **2015 Lola**, a 60/40 Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon blend that spent 18 months in neutral barrels. Sporting a vibrant purple color as well as rocking notes of crème de cassis, blackberries, graphite, and lead pencil, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a rich, elegant texture, and fine, polished tannin. It's a gorgeous wine.

Lastly, the **2015 Zinfandel** is another big, rich, incredibly sexy, pleasure-bent effort from this team. Blueberries, blackberry liqueur, and crème de cassis notes all give way to a full-bodied, spicy, sweetly fruit Zinfandel that's just about over the top, but isn't. Drink it over the coming 4-5 years. www.twovintners.com

UPCHURCH

UPCHURCH	2016	COUNTERPART	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	91-93
UPCHURCH	2016	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	RED MOUNTAIN	NA	RED	93-96
UPCHURCH	2015	COUNTERPART	RED MOUNTAIN	\$45	RED	92+
UPCHURCH	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	RED MOUNTAIN	\$70	RED	94

Chris Upchurch releases his own wine under his Upchurch label which is sourced exclusively from his estate vineyard on Red Mountain.

Coming from the estate's 2 acres of Merlot (two-thirds Merlot and one-third Cabernet Sauvignon), the **2016 Counterpart** has plenty of black cherry and currant fruits, medium to full-bodied richness, notes of graphite and lead pencil, and a clean, classy style. It's certainly going to be an outstanding wine.

The **2016 Cabernet Sauvignon** is even better and is a smoking effort. Crème de cassis, graphite, liquid violets, and exotic spice notes all flow to a full-bodied, concentrated, fresh, focused style. With building tannin yet beautiful length, it's going to benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and keep for two decades.

Showing consistently from barrel, the **2015 Counterpart** is a new cuvée

from Upchurch that's made from 65% Merlot and 35% Cabernet Sauvignon that's all from the estate vineyard on Red Mountain. It has a classic bouquet of black cherries, plums, chocolate, sage, and spice. This flows to a medium to full-bodied, tight, structured red that benefits from plenty of air if drinking anytime soon. It won't hit prime time for at least another 4-5 years, at which point it should drink nicely for 10-15.

The top cuvée is the **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon**, which comes from a tiny parcel at the southern end of Red Mountain. It's a classic expression of this terroir and offers lots of red and black currant fruit, dried earth, graphite, and leafy herbs aromas and flavors. Like the Counterpart cuvée, it's tight and structured, with good acidity, and short-term cellaring is going to be your friend. It's a gorgeous wine, though, that's going to have 2-3 decades of overall longevity. upchurchvineyard.com

UPSIDE DOWN WINE

UPSIDE DOWN WINE	2016	GRENACHE THE GOLD DROP	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$40	RED	90
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Checking in as a blend of 85% Grenache and 15% Mourvèdre that was only partially destemmed and brought up in neutral barrels, the medium ruby-colored 2016 Grenache The Gold Drop offers a perfumed nose of

plums, ripe cherries, savory spice, and underbrush. With polished tannins, it has medium-bodied richness, plenty of texture, and a good finish, all making for an enjoyable, high-quality Grenache that will keep for 5-7 years.

VA PIANO VINEYARDS

VA PIANO VINEYARDS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ROSEBUD	WAHLUKE SLOPE	\$95	RED	94
VA PIANO VINEYARDS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON DUBRUL VINEYARD	YAKIMA VALLEY	\$95	RED	93
VA PIANO VINEYARDS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$50	RED	91
VA PIANO VINEYARDS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON RED MOUNTAIN	RED MOUNTAIN	\$60	RED	93

This is another terrific lineup from winemaker Justin Wylie, who sources grapes from numerous Washington State AVAs.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Rosebud** comes from the Wahluke Slope and is 90% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% each of Merlot and Cabernet Franc, brought up in 80% new French oak. It reveals a saturated purple color as well as a backward yet impressive bouquet of crème de cassis, blueberries, crushed violets, graphite, and toasted spices. With full-bodied richness, a light, elegant texture, and beautiful purity, it's a gorgeous, seamless Cabernet Sauvignon that's going to benefit from short-term cellaring and will shine for 15+ years.

Even inky colored, with **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon DuBrul Vineyard** comes from a great site on the northern edge of the Yakima Valley. It offers a masculine, dark, meaty (almost bloody) bouquet of smoked currants and black cherries, tobacco leaf, truffle, and charcoal. This gives way to a concentrated,

powerful, yet balanced Cabernet Sauvignon that has integrated acidity, fine tannin, and a great finish. It's certainly an outstanding wine and is going to benefit from short-term cellaring and keep for 10-15 years.

The classic **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley** (100% Cabernet Sauvignon) is beautiful, offering perfumed blue fruits, tobacco, graphite, and hints of flowers in its medium to full-bodied, silky style. I love its balance, it doesn't hit you over the head with fruit, and is a joy to drink. This cuvée spent 22 months in 65% new French oak and there are 500 cases made.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain** includes 9% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot, and spent 22 months in 65% new French oak. Another inky colored wine, it offers classic Red Mountain minerality as well as terrific notes of toasted spice, currants, and scorched earth. Layered, medium to full-bodied, concentrated, and balanced, it's going to cruise in the cellar for 15+ years. www.vapianovineyards.com

WALLA WALLA VINTNERS

WALLA WALLA VINTNERS	2012	CABERNET SAUVIGNON CUT BANK ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$60	RED	93
WALLA WALLA VINTNERS	2014	SYRAH ESTATE	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$50	RED	91
WALLA WALLA VINTNERS	2014	CABERNET FRANC WALISER VINEYARD	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$42	RED	91
WALLA WALLA VINTNERS	2014	PETIT VERDOT	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$42	RED	90
WALLA WALLA VINTNERS	2014	BELLO ROSSO	COLUMBIA VLY.	\$42	RED	88
WALLA WALLA VINTNERS	2015	CABERNET SAUVIGNON WALLA WALLA VALLEY	WALLA WALLA VLY.	\$45	RED	91

A blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, and 4% Petit Verdot that spent 27 months in barrel (63% new), the **2012 Cabernet Sauvignon Cut Bank Estate** gives up a terrific bouquet of ripe blackberries, plums, violets, spring flowers and chocolate oak. Deep, rich, full-bodied and concentrated, with sweet tannin, it's a hedonistic, layered, ripe beauty to enjoy over the coming decade or more.

The **2014 Syrah Estate** (100% Syrah) from Walla Walla Vintners has a ripe, lifted, sexy personality. Plums, candied violets, lavender, and exotic spice notes all give way to a full-bodied, up-front, in-your-face beauty that has excellent purity and balance. There are 216 cases.

The **2014 Cabernet Franc Waliser Vineyard** is solid and well worth checking out. Aged 19 months in 20% new French oak, it offers classic notes of red and black currants, dried herbs/earth, and spice in its medium to full-bodied, balanced, enjoyable style. It's going to keep for 10-12 years.

Inky-colored (which is expected from this variety) the **2014 Petit Verdot**

(100% varietal) is a serious steakhouse red that gives up lots of black and blue fruits, violets, and graphite aromatics. This full-bodied, rich, yet fresh and focused effort has excellent purity, fine tannin, and a good finish. It's surprisingly elegant for the variety and is going to keep for a decade.

Toasted spice, dried herbs, chocolate and savory black cherry fruit all emerge from the **2014 Bello Rosso**, which is a Super Tuscan-styled blend of 50% Sangiovese and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon. This medium-bodied, ripe, textured effort is up-front and ready to go, and I suspect best enjoyed over the coming 3-4 years.

The **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley** is a blend of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 3% Petit Verdot that spent 19 months in 54% new French (and some American) oak. It's an exotic, perfumed red offering notes of blueberries, peach pit, tobacco, and earth. With loads of fruit, full body, sweet tannin, and a forward, undeniably delicious style, drink this sexy little fruit bomb over the coming 7-8 years. wallawallavintners.com

WOODWARD CANYON

WOODWARD CANYON	2015	CHARDONNAY	WASHINGTON STATE	\$44	WHITE	90
WOODWARD CANYON	2015	CHARDONNAY CELILO VINEYARD	COLUMBIA GORGE	\$74	WHITE	93
WOODWARD CANYON	2014	MERLOT	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$59	RED	88
WOODWARD CANYON	2014	ESTATE RESERVE	WALLA WALLA VALLEY	\$79	RED	91
WOODWARD CANYON	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ARTIST SERIES	COLUMBIA VALLEY	\$59	RED	94
WOODWARD CANYON	2014	CABERNET SAUVIGNON OLD VINES	WASHINGTON STATE	\$99	RED	95+

These wines are made by Kevin Mott and this is a classic Washington estate making seriously good Bordeaux blends.

The base **2015 Chardonnay** offers classic notes of sautéed apple, brioche, white flowers, and spice. It's fresh, clean, pure, and just impeccably made. It's a great example of Washington State Chardonnay, of which there are far too few.

Woodward Canyon made a beautiful **2015 Chardonnay Celilo Vineyard** which comes from the cooler, windy Columbia Gorge AVA and was brought up in 25% new Burgundy barrels. Citrus blossom, crisp apple, spice, and white flower notes all emerge from this medium-bodied, fresh, lively, beautifully pure Chardonnay that has bright, integrated acidity and a clean finish. Enjoy it over the coming 2-3 years.

Incorporating tiny amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, the **2014 Merlot** sports a deep purple/black color to go with a ripe, heady bouquet of plums, Asian spice, and chocolate. Ripe, straightforward, plump, and loaded with fruit, drink it over the coming 7-8 years.

More expensive, the **2014 Estate Reserve** is a blend of 47% Cabernet

Sauvignon, 24% Cabernet Franc, 18% Merlot, and 11% Petit Verdot that was brought up in 70% new French oak. It offers a balanced, full-bodied, concentrated style as well as terrific notes of blue fruits, graphite, chocolate, and tobacco aromas and flavors. It's a big, rich, ripe effort that offers considerable charm and character. It's drinking nicely today yet should keep for 10-15 years.

The **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Artist Series** checks in as a blend of 92% Cab Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot that spent 22 months in 60% new French oak. Like all the wines here, it's inky colored. Exhibiting a great bouquet of fresh blueberries, leafy herbs, violets, and wet stone, with subtle background oak, this beauty is full-bodied, wonderfully pure, layered, and textured. It's one of the standouts in the lineup.

The gem in the lineup is the **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Old Vines**, undeniably the most classic and age-worthy in the lineup. Blackcurrants, charcoal, graphite, and chocolate notes, as well as ample minerality, all emerge from this full-bodied, rich, concentrated effort. It needs 2-4 years of bottle age but is a beautiful wine with a long life ahead of it. www.woodwardcanyon.com