



The wines from 2017 have a finesse and acid balance that can only be rivaled by a vintage like 2010.

- GREG & BRANDON

2017 SYRAH LAGNIAPPE "RED WILLOW" Walla Walla Valley

We first made Lagniappe in 2005 with the intent of blending Syrah from the Yakima Valley with Syrah from Walla Walla, primarily Forgotten Hills. But a chance meeting with Mike Sauer of Red Willow Vineyard in 2010 changed the trajectory of the wine.

Mike was on a wine panel with me, Greg, and offered an acre of Syrah. We were immediately smitten. We now farm about 5 acres at Red Willow. The coming years saw increased percentages of Red Willow in the Lagniappe blend, but we still considered ourselves a "blending house." However, after the 2014 and 2015 vintages, we realized that we had a few vineyards that demanded a single vineyard bottling. Last year, with the 2016 Lagniappe Syrah, we presented the first single vineyard Red Willow bottling outside the MTA club. The 2017 is as good if not better.

We farm a few blocks at Red Willow for Syrah. The basis for the wine always is the "Chapel Block." While we are not on the "true" Chapel block, we are on the same slope, around the corner with a slightly cooler exposure. This block is magic - bringing deep red fruit, smoke, earth, pepper, and most importantly, structure and intensity. The Marcoux block, across the property with a gentler slope, complements the steeper block by adding mid palate and aromatic complexity. These are yin-yang blocks, each making the wine better. The 2017 is about half of each block.

All Red Willow Syrah is fermented predominately in our concrete fermenters. Concrete adds another dimension of minerality and aromatic complexity, which is readily apparent in the wine. The 2017 Red Willow was fermented 90% whole cluster with native yeasts. It was aged in a combination of neutral 500-liter puncheons and 10% new French 225-liter barrels for 18 months.

Tasting Notes: "Deeper ruby/purple, with blackberry fruits interwoven with lots of ground pepper, gravelly earth, and iron-laced aromatics, it hits the palate with medium to full-bodied richness, ripe yet certainly present tannins, and a great finish. The balance here is spot on and it's a classic, age-worthy Syrah from this estate." Jeb Dunnuck

Varietal: 100% Syrah

Vineyard: Red Willow

Whole Cluster: 90%

Cases: 500

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DRINKING WINDOW
2022 - 2047

2016 SYRAH "OLDFIELD" *MTA ONLY* Columbia Valley

This is our second MTA offering from Oldfield Vineyard. The first was from the 2013 vintage. While Oldfield Vineyard may be a new name to all but the geekiest Washington wine lover, Boushey Vineyard won't be. Why would we mention Dick Boushey's legendary vineyard? Because Oldfield Vineyard is contiguous with Boushey and under his management. While the vineyard is young, it has already proven it will live up to the Boushey pedigree. In the 2013 blending trials, it was a standout. We immediately knew it would be an MTA wine.

Washington owes a lot of Syrah's success to Doug McCrea of McCrea Cellars, who was a Rhône Pioneer. Getting cuttings from McDowell Vineyards in 1989 of Grenache, Doug knew that Syrah would also work in the state. In 1994, he convinced Dick Boushey to plant Syrah in his vineyard in Yakima. Boushey Vineyard, like Red Willow nearby, is a world-class site for Syrah. Jim Holmes also planted Syrah in Red Mountain, much warmer at 30 miles east at the same time.

The Phelps Clone, attributed to Napa's Joseph Phelps, is the dominant clone for Syrah in Washington State. This wine, however, is 70% Clone 383, originally from Hermitage in the Northern Rhône. Clone 383 is known for small berries that give an intense and earthy style of Syrah. The remaining 30% is Phelps Clone, the standard workhorse in Washington and much of California.

This wine was co-fermented with 5% Viognier and the Syrah was fermented 100% on stems. It was then aged in a mix of older 225L and 500L puncheons for 18 months.

The 2016 Oldfield Vineyard Syrah reminds me of a combination of a Red Willow wine and a Walla Walla Rocks wine. It has the freshness and red fruit of Red Willow, but the structure and depth of a Rocks wine. Red Willow is classical music, Oldfield is blues.

Tasting Notes: Purple/black, ripe, round. Almost CA Syrah. Still tight. Very young. More red fruit on the palate. Fruit dominates with some stone. Almost like Red Willow on the palate. Very similar to what we used to get from the nearby Minick Vineyard. Tar, roasted meats, stone, gravel. Full (for us) with crazy length. For those that appreciate CA Syrah, this will be a favorite.

Varietal: 95% Syrah
5% Viognier

Vineyard: Oldfield

Whole Cluster: 100%

Cases: 149

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DRINKING WINDOW
2020 - 2040

GRAMERCY CELLARS

2016 TEMPRANILLO "INIGO MONTOYA" Walla Walla Valley

In early 2017, Brandon and I decided to replace the Tempranillo block with Cabernet Franc. What do we have against Tempranillo? Nadda. It's a fantastic variety for Washington. But it's not you; it's me. We are finding that we love our Cabernet, with a bit of Cabernet Franc added. While we have small parcels of Cab Franc at our JB George and Octave Vineyards, we don't have enough at either vineyard for a full, healthy ferment. Adding an acre of Cabernet Franc at JB George will also give us the ability for an occasional estate single-vineyard Cabernet Franc cuvée.

Our last Tempranillo is 80% Tempranillo, 10% Grenache, and 10% Syrah. The Grenache was sourced from Alder Ridge Vineyard, adding power and fruit to the delicacy of Tempranillo. The Syrah, from Block 50 at Les Collines, located at the top of the vineyard, adds earthiness and freshness.

While this is our last Tempranillo, we have reserved about 100 cases each vintage since 2008 to release as the wines age and change over the coming 10-15 years. While we won't be producing Gramercy Tempranillo after 2016, we will be drinking and offering it to club members.

The 2016 Tempranillo was fermented in open-top stainless steel and punched down three times a day. Portions of the Syrah and Grenache were fermented whole cluster. Fermentation lasted for 14 days. We aged the blend in a combination of new and used American and French Oak barrels for 18 months.

Tasting Notes: A mix of red & black fruits. Extremely earthy, more so than other releases. Red flowers, star anise, stone mineral, smoke, orange peel, a touch of Asian sweet & sour sauce. Green herbs – tarragon, rosemary. Smoked meat, soy, mushroom. Firm acidity & tannin. A bit of sweet oak with Asian spice.

Varietal: 80% Tempranillo
10% Grenache
10% Syrah

Vineyard: Gramercy Estate
Les Collines
Alder Ridge

Aging Profile: 18 months in 10%
new French &
American Oak

Cases: 237



2016 SYRAH Walla Walla Valley

Writing tasting notes on new, unreleased wines is often a difficult process. I need to look into the future to see where a wine is going to go. I tend to go round & round, thinking about it, especially when it's young. Sometimes, the wine needs time to evolve, open, & show itself. I know the wine will be great. The wine will find its way; just give it time. Othertimes, I taste one of our young wines while I'm writing & drink the entire bottle myself. The 2016 Walla Walla Syrah is one of those wines.

I feel like we have been here before. We used to make a Walla Walla Syrah. We then decided to narrow that focus to the Les Collines Vineyard, as it has developed into a truly world-class Syrah site. But as Brandon and I kept tasting our lots, it was evident that there was still something we wanted to show in Walla Walla. There is elegance, power, and beauty in combining the Rocks with fruit that is fresher like Les Collines or Forgotten Hills. So, we went back to a Walla Walla blend with a new wine. I guess what comes around goes around.

The Walla Walla Syrah is a blend of Holy Roller Vineyard in the Rocks District with our estate vineyard Forgotten Hills, at the base of the Blue Mountains. These sites are perfect compliments. I'll tell you why. Forgotten Hills brings elegance, freshness, acidity and structure while Holy Roller brings power and classic Syrah aromatics. We fermented the wine in both concrete and small stainless-steel tank with 65% whole cluster. Forgotten Hills was fermented with a much greater proportion of whole cluster than Holy Roller. It was then aged in a combination of neutral French puncheon and 225L barrels.

Tasting Notes: "Classic Syrah, the 2016 Walla Walla Syrah opens with a tight core of blackberry, red currant, dusty plum and crème de cassis aromas, with complex and subtle nuances of smoked meat, dusty black peppercorn and violets. Medium to full-bodied, the palate is structured and precise, with a rocky tension on the mid-palate. The wine is clean and expressive, finishing long and contemplative with hints of violets and leather on the aftertaste." – Anthony Mueller, The Wine Advocate.

DRINKING WINDOW
2020 - 2042

Varietal: 100% Syrah
Vineyard: Forgotten Hills
Holy Roller

Whole Cluster: 65%

Cases: 1011

2017 MOURVÈDRE "L'IDIOT DU VILLAGE" Columbia Valley

We've been thinking about Mourvèdre more & more each year and its place in Washington. Mourvèdre is a fantastic grape. What blows us away is its ability to retain red fruit characteristics. Most red varieties in hot areas will quickly turn to black fruit characteristics. While that can be okay, combined with the intense earthiness & funk, it soon becomes tiring to drink. However, if one plants Mourvèdre in a blistering climate, it still stays red fruit & retains its freshness. It is a ripe, rich wine that somehow still manages to be a summer wine. We frequently break out a Bandol or L'Idiot on even the hottest Washington days.

Earlier this year, I hosted a Zoom tasting on the wines of Bandol. We tasted a number of the great properties of Bandol: Pibarnon, Tempier, Pradaux, etc. We also tasted our 2012 Mourvedre. I was ecstatic that it's playing in the same league as the Bandol heavy hitters. Its definitely a wine that improves with a bit of age. I mapped my favorite wineries in the region on Google Earth. In additional, I also placed many of our Rhône vineyards for Mourvèdre, Grenache and Syrah on the map as well. A link to the project is here: <http://ow.ly/eiVK3or6hmx>

As I wrote last year, "The 2016 Mourvèdre is stunning, as is the 2017! Just you wait." The 2017 vintage has not disappointed and perhaps exceeded expectations. In fact, we liked the 2017 Mourvèdre so much, we even made a tiny amount of Lower East Mourvèdre.

We continue to be blown away by the complexity and intensity of the Mourvèdre from both Olsen and Alder Ridge Vineyards. Each vineyard contributes something different. We always say Olsen is all about freshness and aromatics. Alder Ridge brings depth and structure. In 2017, the wine is 58% Alder Ridge and 42% Olsen Vineyard, a dance of elegance and power. This 100% Mourvèdre was fermented this with 50% whole cluster and aged for 18 months in old oak.

Tasting Notes: Spice – Cumin, garam masala, cinnamon, turmeric and everything else in VJs spice cabinet. (If you know, you know...) That classic Mourvèdre burned pot roast. Screams winter in front of the fireplace, but drinks summer at the beach. Dark red cherry, plum, blackberry, peach skin. Purple flowers. Iodine, blood and cured meats. On the palate, its rich and ripe but still fresh. Expansive with full palate length. Extremely long finish lasting minutes.

Varietal: 100% Mourvèdre

Vineyards: Alder Ridge
Olsen

Whole Cluster: 50%

Cases: 321

DRINKING WINDOW
2021 - 2037

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