

2003 Cabernet Sauvignon

Columbia Valley, Washington

THE WINE

While Washington hasn't received the most press for its Cabernets it is slowly gaining recognition throughout the wine world as a serious contender. Our 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon is regal and full-bodied, yet approachable. It gives off aromas reminiscent of ripe figs and strawberry jam with a touch of truffles and earth. In the mouth it shows off definite Cabernet varietal character and dark, ripe fruit combined with earthy complexity and light, integrated oak. Pair this wine with lightly seasoned meats and steak.

THE VINTAGE AND VINEYARDS

The grapes were sourced from the entire Columbia Valley growing region. The growing season of 2003 was the warmest of the last decade. Warmer regions such as the Horse Heaven Hills and Wahluke Slope produced very ripe and tannic fruit while the Yakima Valley brought balance to sugar, acidity, and fruit character. The total heat unit accumulation (April 1 to October 31) was 15% higher than the average. A fairly cool spring was followed by a long, warm summer. It was also a dry year, with only 2 inches of rain compared to the 70-year average of 3½ inches. Perfect harvest conditions in September resulted in a vintage of great quality.

THE WINEMAKING

The fruit was harvested between September 5th and October 24th at an average 24.1°Brix. The base wines fermented primarily with Pasteur Red yeast for an average of five days at a peak temperature of 89°F. After pressing they were all inoculated for malolactic fermentation and allowed to reach dryness with frequent racking. Once dry the wines were aged exposed to oak for up to ten months with the goal of preserving fruit and mellowing the wine.

THE SCREWCAP SEAL

Hogue Cellars has switched to screwcap seals following its four-year closures study, which found that screwcaps best preserve wine quality in the bottle, keep flavors freshest, eliminate the threat of cork taint, and ensure consistency of flavors.

THE NUMBERS

Appellation: Columbia Valley

Varietal Percentage: 76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Merlot, 7% Syrah, 3% Cabernet Franc

Harvest Brix: 24.1°

TA: 0.59/100 ml

pH: 3.70

Alcohol: 13.9%



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