



2009 *64% Merlot & 36% Cabernet Franc*
COLUMBIA VALLEY

Annually we offer a selected blend of merlot and cabernet franc blended from Conner Lee and Champoux Vineyards. Conner Lee Vineyard's fruit is 90% of the wine offering the elegant, perfumed tones. The vines at Conner Lee are mature at 18 years old. Conner Lee's sandy soils, cold spring and fall nights retain natural fruit acids, while the hot summer heat consistently ripens these fruits. Seventy miles south, Champoux Vineyard's growing season is longer in the Horse Heaven Hills offering sweet black fruit from their 12 year old cabernet franc vines. Both vineyards' consistent high qualities are from modern, sophisticated management in the vineyard.

This vintage is another powerful one with a hot September. At Conner Lee we grow four pounds per plant, equivalent to Bordeaux First Growth harvest yields. All our fruits are hand harvested, hand sorted on modern shaker tables and gravity transferred to tank. These processes allow us to preserve the natural abundant aromatics. There's a nose of Northwest marionberries and violets, with a rich palate from attack to finish, and our stylistic supple texture. Rich merlot dominates the young palate and compliments the cabernet franc's grip and fragrance. Youthful and accessible now, the intense fruit, natural acid and tannin, will allow this wine to age ten years or more.

The merlot from Conner Lee was harvested on September 16th, with the cabernet franc harvested October 8th at 23° brix hydrometer and 8.0g organic acids. The wine was 14 days on skins, and then went directly to barrels. The Champoux Vineyard cabernet franc was fully mature September 2nd measuring 24° brix hydrometer. It fermented 22 days on skins before barrel aging. As a final blend, the alcohol is 14.1%. We aerated during fermentation in open-top tanks with unique proprietary air tools, hand punched down and selected only free run wine to blend. The wine was aged in Bordeaux Chateaux barrels from select coopers with 60% of them new. The wine was bottled on January 19th, 2011.

Three hundred eighty-three cases were bottled along with half bottles, magnums and larger format bottles. The wine is released March 1st each year for \$40 per bottle.