



2002 *90% Merlot & 10% Cabernet Franc*
COLUMBIA VALLEY

Annually we offer a vintage selected blend of cabernet franc and merlot. The cabernet franc was planted in Champoux Vineyard in 1997. Champoux Vineyard lies above the Columbia River on Phinney Hill. The merlot, planted in 1992, is grown at Conner Lee Vineyard just south of Othello, Washington, on Radar Hill. In the Spring and Fall there the nights cool down substantially, the growing season is shorter, and the day heat ripens the clusters consistently.

The Champoux Vineyard cabernet franc was hand-harvested on September 28th, at full grape maturity. The vines grew eight pounds per plant. The cabernet franc measured 25.5°brix, 3.50 pH, and 5.0 g/L acid as fresh fruit. The merlot was handpicked from Conner Lee Vineyard on September 23rd, measuring 25.1°brix, 3.61 pH, and 6.5 g/L acid as fresh fruit. The vines grew 5.5 pounds per plant.

Open vessel fermented, hand punched down and aerated during ferment, the wines finished sugar and malolactic ferment in barrels. Aged entirely in traditional French chateau barrels, 50% new, for 15 months, the wines were blended, eggwhite-fined and bottled in November of 2003. At bottling, the alcohol was 14.4% and the pH 3.85.

The nose is full of Washington blueberries, dark chocolate, cedar, and elegant blended fruit complexity with a balanced weight and texture. The merlot dominates the palate with full fruit, beetroot, and plentiful and dusty tannins. From its twenty year history, this is the greatest vintage from Conner Lee Vineyard. Youthful but accessible now, the intense fruit, balanced oak and tannin, will allow this wine to age ten years or more.

This wine is dedicated to the bracerros who work the vines from pruning to harvest to develop our lovely fruits.

One hundred eighty-seven cases were bottled. The wine was released March 1, 2004.