



## 2013 *Conner Lee Vineyard*

CHARDONNAY

COLUMBIA VALLEY

**Vineyard:** We have made a vineyard-designate Conner Lee Vineyard Chardonnay since our debut 2000 vintage. Originally planted in the early 1980s, Conner Lee is located at an elevation of approximately 2,000 feet on the plateau of Radar Hill south of Othello, Washington. Farmed by Jerry Bookwalter and Tom Thorsen, it is a cool site in a warm, sunny region. In our Eastern Washington desert environment, the spring and fall nights can be 50 degrees cooler than the daytime temperatures. The hot summer months of July and August ripen the fruit, while cooler fall temperatures keep the acids high and the pH low. We work with Conner Lee's prized 1989 block and 2005 'clone #95' block. Both are planted with ungrafted vines in well-drained sandy-silt soils. To achieve the clean and complex style this wine is known for, we prune for optimum fruit positions in February, shoot thin in May and cluster thin at veraison—all to promote concentration in the fruit early in the year.

**Vintage & Harvest:** Prior to a big cool down in the last several weeks of the growing season, 2013 was on track to be one of the hottest growing seasons in memory. Plenty of sunshine, and a lack of any significant rain events, allowed us complete control over irrigation, which in turn enabled us to fine tune crop size and fruit development. Our 1989 block of chardonnay was picked at 23.0° Brix on September 17th, with our clone #95 grapes arriving on September 26th at 21.8°.

**Winemaking:** To preserve this wine's natural acidity and balance, as well as its more delicate aromas, it was 100% whole-cluster pressed. 60% was fermented in predominantly mature Burgundy barrels, with a total new French oak component of just 8% (one barrel), and the remainder fermented in concrete. To further maintain its bright, fresh character, only 50% of the wine went through malolactic fermentation. In keeping with our gentle winemaking approach, and a belief in preserving nuance and complexity, this wine was not cold stabilized. As a result, if stored exceedingly cold, it may shed natural tartaric crystals.

**Tasting Notes:** While this wine displays the poise, structure and minerality that have become hallmarks of our Conner Lee Vineyard Chardonnay, the warm 2013 vintage has also delivered alluring orange spice and tropical flower notes that accentuate its depth and richness. On the silky palate, layers of zesty citrus mingle with chamomile, hibiscus and honeysuckle, as well as hints of toasty nutmeg and cinnamon spice, resulting in a wine that effortlessly combines power and grace. Alcohol 14.5%.

Three hundred and thirty cases were produced. Released September 1, 2014.  
Retail for \$40.