



2014 *Rockgarden Estate*

75% MOURVÈDRE, 20% SYRAH, 5% GRENACHE

WALLA WALLA VALLEY

**Vineyard:** This mourvèdre-based blend comes exclusively from our Rockgarden Estate in The Rocks District of Milton-Freewater. Long hailed as the best fruit-farming land in Walla Walla Valley, in 2015, The Rocks District earned official recognition as an American Viticultural Area, cementing its status as one of the finest winegrowing areas in all of Washington. Named for the famed basalt cobblestones that make this part of the valley so renowned for winegrowing, our organic-certified Rockgarden Estate is perfectly situated in the highest part of The Rocks District. This unique location has proven ideal for Rhône varieties, yielding silky structured wines, recognized for their fruit purity and savory spice.

**Vintage & Harvest:** 2014 delivered abundant spring heat, leading to early budbreak and flowering. To address the heat, which continued through summer, we tailored our irrigation, crop size and shading to the needs of the vineyard. In the run up to harvest, Mother Nature delivered ideal temperate weather, which allowed us to pick exactly when we wished. We harvested our mourvèdre on October 13th and October 20th, at 23.4° and 23.7° Brix respectively. The Phelps Clone syrah used in this wine came in on September 23rd at 22.5°, and the grenache came in on September 29th at 23.0° Brix. Our mourvèdre and grenache were sourced from the Tablas Creek nursery, and are initially from Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

**Winemaking:** Grapes were harvest by hand and hand sorted on shaker tables. Everything was destemmed and fermented in small 1-ton containers for slow, cool native yeast fermentations. The syrah fermentation took 13 days until pressing, the mourvèdre 12 days, and the grenache took 7. Only free-run wine was selected, all of which was aged on the lees in 100% neutral barrels for 16 months. Burgundy barrels were used for the syrah and grenache, with Bordeaux barrels selected for the mourvèdre. Only 5% new oak was used overall. The final blend was bottled unfined. Alcohol 13.3%.

**Tasting Notes:** As the vines at our Rockgarden Estate have continued to mature and evolve, in addition to becoming a source for fabulous syrah and cabernet, they have also begun yielding a spectacular expression of mourvèdre. Like Rhône meets The Rocks District, this complex blend combines classic mourvèdre notes of meat and minerality, with abundant layers of plum, smoke and spicy black pepper, while the

grenache and syrah add bright and juicy notes of wild black raspberry and Kirsch. Though 2014 was a warm vintage, this seamlessly layered blend is bright and dynamic, with an energy and acidity that lift the pure fruit flavors, and carry the wine to a poised and focused finish.

One hundred and twenty-three cases, including large formats, released September 1, 2016. Retail for \$48.