



2016 *Rockgarden Estate*

73% MOURVÈDRE, 18% SYRAH, 10% 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 finest 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 Washington's preeminent winegrowing regions. Named for the famed basalt cobblestones that make this part of the valley so renowned for winegrowing, our 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: While the 2016 growing season delivered our fourth year in a row of early budbreak and flowering, a perfectly timed mid-summer cooldown extended the season. This provided the grapes with an ideal amount of hangtime, while preserving the natural acidity that is so integral to our style. We harvested our mourvèdre and grenache on October 10th at 21.7° and 22.8° Brix respectively. Our Clone 174 syrah was picked on October 3rd at 23.8°. Our mourvèdre and grenache were sourced from the Tablas Creek nursery, and were originally from Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

Winemaking: Grapes were harvested by hand and hand-sorted on shaker tables. Everything was destemmed, and the mourvèdre and syrah were fermented in small 2-ton containers, with slow, cool native yeast fermentations. To enhance extraction, the grenache was fermented in an upright wood tank. The syrah took 14 days until pressing, the mourvèdre 13, and the grenache took 11. Only free-run wine was selected, all of which was aged on the lees in 100% neutral Burgundy barrels and 500-liter puncheons for 19 months. The final blend was bottled unfiltered. Alcohol 13.0%.

Tasting Notes: Like Rhône meets The Rocks District, this compelling blend combines classic mourvèdre notes of meat, minerality and black pepper, with alluring red berry layers of raspberry strawberry and cranberry from the grenache. Savoriness from the syrah complements the fruit, while adding depth and a sophisticated note of olive tapenade. Throughout, the silky tannins that are one of the hallmarks of the rocks provide richness, with the mourvèdre's excellent natural acidity underscoring the blend's age-worthy structure.

One hundred and fourteen cases, including large formats, released September 1st, 2018.