



WICKED Tasting Notes

Saturday, November 24 - McCrea Cellars

McCrea Cellars was Washington State's first winery entirely dedicated to Syrah and to Rhône varietal wines. In a region never before explored for this family of grapes, winemaker Doug McCrea dedicated nearly two decades seeking and establishing appropriate vineyard sites that would nurture Syrah and each Rhône varietal according to its individual requirements. The current releases from McCrea Cellars express the culmination of this effort, made possible only by the close relationship between McCrea and several of the State's finest growers.

Following are Doug McCrea's tasting notes on the current releases. Join us in exploring the wines of this pioneer of Washington State wines!



2010 Grenache Blanc - \$26.99

With only a few acres in production in the Northwest, this is truly a very exclusive wine. The vines are sourced from the famous Beaucastel vineyard in the Rhône, via Tablas Creek. This vintage is leaner, crisper and brighter than in the past, with green apples and pineapple predominating. The addition of some Marsanne helps balance the acidity and brings nice layers of fruit and minerals to the finished wine. It will complement foods where high acidity is desired, such as oysters on the half shell.

86% Grenache Blanc, 14% Marsanne

2010 Viognier - \$26.99

In 1997 McCrea introduced Viognier to the Northwest. Based on the dozens of wineries that have followed suit, it has proven to be very well suited to Washington. This vintage they revisit the complexity that Roussanne brings to what's now a Washington classic. The Viognier was fermented in stainless steel and finished in barrel, the Roussanne completely in neutral barrels. The fruit represents excellent purity and depth. This 2010 is like the crisp, lean wines of Condrieu.

76% Viognier 11% Roussanne

2008 Grenache - \$31.99

McCrea enjoys the strawberry and spice of Grenache so much that they bottle some varietally, with small amounts of other varietals to add interest and richness, really setting off this expressive grape. The 2008 Grenache was one of the most difficult vintages in twenty years, but possesses a rare “beauty,” delicacy, and elegant style. It should age gracefully.

91 points; Wine Enthusiast

81% Grenache, 7% Syrah, 5% Cunoise, 5% Cinsault, 2% Mourvèdre

2008 Cuvée Orleans Syrah - \$48.99

Cuvée Orleans is McCrea’s most exclusive bottling, and is drawn from the very best Syrah barrels in a tribute to Doug’s birthplace, New Orleans. The fruit is sourced from three of Washington’s finest Syrah vineyards, boasting some of the oldest Syrah plantings in the state. This wine is focused on elegance, complexity and finesse. The addition of some Viognier to the Syrah fermenters, in the tradition of wines from Côte Rôtie, produces distinct and often dramatic outcomes. The combination of the intense fruit from Ciel and Elephant Mountain with the elegant, complex, slow-ripened Boushey results in a sensuous flood of aromas and flavors. The wine will cellar well for ten to twenty years.

92% Syrah 8% Viognier

2008 Boushey Vineyard Syrah - \$42.99

Dick Boushey’s vineyard sits well above the valley floor in the central Yakima Valley north of Grandview. The steep, south-facing hillside of calcified basalt captures the sun’s intensity and provides for excellent, gradual ripening; long growing conditions; and heightened complexity. It has been described as, “the best syrah vineyard in the state, if not the country” (Paul Gregutt, Wine Enthusiast). The Grande Côte has consistently produced a wine classically Northern Rhône in character. It has aromas of earthiness, leather, cedar, and mushrooms with high-tones of violets, cassis and blueberry, followed by dense flavors of cherry, plum, licorice, smoked meats, pencil lead, toasted nuts and truffle. It finishes with great acidity – an assurance of its excellent cellaring potential. This wine will drink well for ten to twenty years.

100% Syrah

2008 Amerique Syrah - \$37.99

At harvest, the grapes were gently crushed, then fermented in small lots following several days of cold soak, using a variety of yeast strains isolated from the Rhône valley. When complete, the wine was dejuiced through large stainless steel strainers, then gently transferred to one-, two- and three-year-old American oak barrels. The inclusion of older oak mitigates the intense, direct character often associated with American oak, resulting in a more balanced, integrated wine. Similar to an Australian Shiraz, the flavors are clean and berry-driven. The oak acts as a framework providing excellent length and structure, surrounding the intense, mouth-coating fruit. This wine is capable of cellaring for five to ten years.

81% Syrah, 18% Mourvèdre 1% Grenache