



Wine Spectator **91 pts**
Wine Enthusiast **90 pts**
The Wine Advocate **91 pts**

2013 | PROTAGONIST

COLUMBIA VALLEY A.V.A.
CONNER LEE VINEYARD

*C*lassic ripe Cabernet aromas invite you to a glass filled with dark fruits, cream and coffee tones. Generous amounts of black fruits, graphite, minerals, cocoa and rose petals seamlessly fill the nose and palate. The finish is long, filled with fruit and vanilla with toasty oak and mocha flavors echoing across this rich wine. Fine smooth tannins and refreshing acidity structure this refreshing young Cabernet that opens well in the glass. Powerful, age worthy, long and generous, this wine will richly reward for a decade or two, enjoyable with a host of foods throughout the seasons.

VINTAGE

Vintage 2013 fruit from our vineyards revealed the highest recorded tannin and color potential yet seen in Washington. Our vintage portfolio carries a volume and weight that matched our house style of rich and smooth age worthy reds. Spring 2013 began the growing season without problems. Flowering June 7-10 at Conner Lee Vineyard afforded an early ripening vintage. Summer temperatures were hotter than average with many July and August days over 100F. Verasion was early in August under good conditions, a hallmark of great vintages. Our well-managed vineyard blocks had fruit shaded with healthy canopies, balancing acidity and sugar ripeness while keeping fruit from sunburn. September's heat ended with the early October storm, lowering temperatures in our interior dry desert. By October 10th, the vintage was record-breaking in total heat units, so cool weather was welcome. We then picked all our red fruit with ease under clear skies with cold nights at a leisurely pace.

WINEMAKING

All these Cabernets were hand picked in the mornings of October 16th-19th leading up to October's Hunter's full moon. We hand sorted the clusters, then destemmed into small one- and four-ton fermenters for hand mixing. Chilled and cold soaked for three days developing richness and smooth skin tannins, we then fermented slowly at cool temperatures below 87F. Hand mixed daily for two weeks on skins, fermentations finished primary ferment in puncheons and traditional Bordeaux cooperage. We stirred and aged on lees, reductively developing savory tones complementary to the powerful fruit. After 16 months, selected 60 of our favorite barrels from our old blocks at Conner Lee Vineyard for this reserve-styled Cabernet Sauvignon. With the addition of five barrels of choice syrah for aromatic lift and even darker color, we designed a final blend that describes Cabernet at its most classic 2013 vintage expression. Egg white fined prior to bottling, we then filtered for purity and aging stability.

APPELLATIONS & VINEYARDS

Columbia Valley 100% | 100% Conner Lee

FINAL BLEND

95% Cabernet Sauvignon
5% Syrah

AGING

25% New French puncheons, 50% new French barrels, 25% used French barrels

CASES PRODUCED 3,000 6-pack cases/750mL

TECHNICAL DATA Bottled: Summer 2015 • Alcohol: 14.9% by volume • pH: 3.67 • TA: 6.2 • RS: 1 g/L

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