

Don't miss the Domestic Rhone Tasting at Santiam Wine Company on Friday, April 9th 4 -7pm

Price \$20 for the first 5 pours. Add \$5 for the super pour... \$25 for the full meal deal! and remember you can share!

The Wines:

2006 Andrew Rich "Coup d' Etat Columbia Valley \$25.

Doing his part (for the fifth time) to "epater le merloisie," Andrew has welcomed back to the barricades the prodigal Cunoise, fighting the good fight along side Grenache, Mourvedre, and Syrah. As new-world Rhone-style blends go, this one is remarkably balanced without lacking a bit of that wild, peppery, Mediterranean scrubland thing found in our favorite Chateauneuf-du-Pape's.

2007 Copain Syrah "Tous Ensemble" Mendocino County \$20.

Wells Guthrie has created an affordable, wonderfully drinkable syrah for Copain's Tous Ensemble series. A blend of fruit from Alder Springs, Eaglepoint Ranch, Hawks Butte and McDowell Valley vineyards, the Tous Ensemble is aged in 15% new French oak. Like Holly Golightly running through a briar patch, the wine's nose is fresh and fruit-filled with hints of smoke and dark chocolate deftly interwoven. On the palate it's medium-bodied with chalky tannins and good acidity to balance out the fruit. Give it a little air to let the flavors really shine if drinking now and enjoy over the next five years.

2008 Syncline Syrah Columbia Valley \$25.

Blended to showcase classic Washington Syrah, this wine draws from Horse Heaven Hills and Wahluke Slope vineyards. Brilliant deep ruby color with purple/red interior. Complex aromatics of blackberries and roasted cacao bean accentuate this concentrated Syrah. In the mouth this wine leads off with dark bramble fruits, and meaty aromas. Followed by olive stones, spice, and violets. Substantial weight is brightened by a backbone of acidity and ripe tannins. The tiny hint of Mourvedre blended adds a bit of brightening plum flavors. An intriguing combination of finesse and power that is sure to improve over time.

This review is for the 2007 vintage: The 2007 Syrah is 65% Horse Heaven Hills and 35% Wahluke Slope fruit. An enticing nose of spice box, smoked meat, hung game, and blueberry are first class. This leads to an elegant yet mouth-filling Syrah that has exceptional concentration and length. It can be enjoyed now for its fleshy fruit but will be more refined and civilized with 6-8 years of additional bottle age. 93 Points Robert Parker

James and Poppie Mantone's Syncline Wine Cellars is on the eastern edge of the beautiful Columbia Gorge, an area better known for outdoor sports (fishing, boating, wind surfing) than wine production.

2008 Owen Roe Sinister Hand Columbia Valley was \$23. now \$17.50!

"Our primary source for this wine is Dr. Steve Elerding,s vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills, where the proximity of the Columbia River is a vital part of the success of these traditional Rhone varietals. This wine is very dark with fruit flavors, pepper and an excellent texture. The blend is 62% Grenache, 35% Syrah, 3% Mourvedre." - the winery

2007 Betz Besoleil Grenache Columbia Valley \$48.

The 2007 Besoleil is Betz Family,s take on Chateauneuf-du-Pape with a blend of 80% Grenache, 15% Mourvedre, and 5% Syrah sourced from three AVAs. Dark ruby-colored, it offers up a fragrant perfume of cigar box, lavender, sage, black cherry, and black raspberry. Layered on the palate, it has a silky texture, layered, savory red and black fruit, spice and earth notes, and a sweet, lengthy finish. It will benefit from 1-2 years of additional bottle age and offer prime drinking from 2011 to 2019. **92 Points Robert Parker**

Betz Family Winery remains one of Washington,s benchmarks for top quality wines from Rhone and Bordeaux grape varieties. Bob Betz,s 2007 collection shows him continuing at the top of his game (with plenty of help from his family).

Super Pour (Optional) \$5.

2007 Radio-Coteau Cherry Camp Sonoma Coast Syrah \$60.

The blockbuster 2007 Syrah Cherry Camp boasts an opaque purple color along with a big, sweet kiss of crème de cassis, blackberry liqueur, spring flowers, and forest floor. Complex, extravagantly rich, opulent, and flamboyant, this superb Syrah should drink well for 8-10 years. **95+ Robert Parker**

An artisanal winery run with meticulous attention to detail by Eric Sussman, Radio-Coteau continues to follow a fair pricing strategy for its high quality Chardonnays, Pinot Noirs, Syrahs, and Zinfandels. As a postscript, Eric Sussman told me that his winery was certified biodynamic in 2008. All his fermentations are native (indigenous yeasts from the vineyard), he uses minimal SO₂, minimal racking, extended lees contact, and bottles all his wines in house with no fining or filtration. These are all characteristics of the younger generation of conscientious wine producers.

Thank you!

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