



2006 Loess Vineyard Syrah

Walla Walla Valley

\$40 Winery Retail Price

248 cases produced

Vineyard Notes

Loess Vineyard is one of the estate vineyards of the prestigious Leonetti Cellar. Loess Vineyard consists of the 27-acre hillside next to their winery, and includes just two acres of Syrah (Phelps clone), planted in 2002. Loess (pronounced “lust” without the t) refers to the wind blown soils that are predominant throughout the Walla Walla Valley. These mineral rich soil deposits rest atop thick basalt and provide a very rich ecosystem for vines to thrive and mature in over time, adding depth and complexity to the grapes produced above ground. While this vineyard is still young, the sustainable farming practices of a world-class estate, combined with an extremely rich terroir have already produced wines of incredible structure, balance and expression. While the 2006 growing season offered challenges for certain vineyards, the July to September stretch was ideal, consistent and produced very bold wines. The Loess Syrah was picked at the end of September and gave us high natural acidity and a dense, earthy flavor profile.

Winemaking Notes

Because of the youthfulness of the vineyard, we again co-fermented a small amount (3%) of Viognier into this wine, consistent with the traditions of the Northern Rhône. The wine was aged for almost 15 months in barrel and an additional 11 months in bottle before release. We used 100% French oak barrels, all “second fills” (e.g. new barrels from the prior vintage that have been used for one full aging year) to avoid smothering the wine with unnecessary structural impartations, aromatics or flavors. We want you to experience Loess Vineyard in its purest expression. The extended aging and intentional barrel program provides a lush mouth feel that extends throughout a very loooong finish.

Tasting Notes

Again, because the vines are young and still maturing, we don’t see a dark, dense color we would otherwise expect from Walla Walla Syrah. The aromatics are consistently earthy, rather than fruit forward, with hints of dried rose petals and smelling more like a butcher shop or salumiere than a blueberry patch. The earthy flavors follow, with bold flavors of bloody, smoky meat combined with dark red fruit reminiscent of homemade rhubarb pie. The soft, refined tannins go to the tip of the tongue and blend well with the natural vibrancy of the Syrah acids, which cut right through the middle of the mouth. The aromas, flavors and structure profile make for an outstanding food pairing wine.