

2003 Fidelitas Optu Red Wine

columbia valley

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

In Latin, Optu means "best". A harmonious, seamless wine of exceptional character, Optu unites three different varietals from the Columbia Valley's most prestigious vineyards. The result? A tremendously complex wine with black, dense, satiny texture, heavenly black raspberry, blackberry, cherry and spicy oak flavors that shine now, and will only become more irresistible with age. Optu is a result of blending grapes from various vineyards to produce the very best wine possible, which many consider **the true art of winemaking**.

VINTAGE

2003 was one of the warmest growing seasons and harvests in the last 20 years. This resulted in smaller berry size and lighter cluster weights, which produced lower yields. The unusually hot growing season resulted in early ripening in the warmer areas and a quick start to harvest with flavorful ripe fruit in the early part of the vintage. Modest precipitation in August and September helped cool down the vineyards, slowed down ripening and allowed many of the vineyards in the cooler regions to benefit from the extra hang time which improved fruit flavors and intensity.

VINEYARDS

7 Vineyard / 8 Vineyard Blocks

Cabernet Sauvignon: Conner Lee Vineyard (40%), Stillwater Creek (18%), Red Mountain (8%), Klipsun Vineyard (2%)

Merlot: Conner Lee Vineyard (16%), Klipsun Vineyard (12%)

Cabernet Franc: Gamache Vineyard

FERMENTATION AND AGING

All the fruit for the Cabernet Sauvignon was hand picked and sorted in the vineyard. Upon arrival at the winery, the fruit was destemmed and crushed directly to a small fermentation tank where the wines were punched down three times daily. Average primary fermentation was seven days in length. Upon completion of fermentation, the wines were gently pressed off and were put into barrels immediately. Once fermentation was complete in barrel, the wine was put through malolactic fermentation immediately. While aging in oak barrels, the wines were racked quarterly to naturally clarify the wine.

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc

OAK AGING

The wine was racked to 100% small oak barrels (French and American), with approximately 50% new oak, and was barrel-aged for 18 months with four rackings.

TECHNICAL

Bottled 575 cases; pH 3.67, acid 0.62 g/100ml, 14.5% alcohol by volume, <0.02% residual sugar

RELEASE DATE

August 1, 2006

