

BETZ

FAMILY WINERY

2013 *La Côte Rousse*, Red Mountain Syrah

The 2014 Vintage...In the vineyards, 2014 marked the third year in a row for an early start for vine growth. Flowering, a crucial period in the vines annual cycle, took place under ideal weather conditions. The warm, calm weather resulted in one of the most compressed flowering periods in recent years, and very even berry size. This also meant that a large crop was hanging in the vineyards, which allowed growers to “green harvest”, a mid-season dropping of any bunches that were uneven or lagging behind in development.

Steady heat continued through July and August, leading to the earliest harvest ever for Betz Family Winery: we picked our first grapes on September 3rd. Over the following 4 weeks we harvested over 40 different vineyard blocks, many of them only 1-2 tons in size. Add to that our time in the vineyards in order to make the best harvest decisions possible, we visited and sampled each vineyard two to three times each week. We were rocking! The wines reflect the steady weather and even grape ripeness.

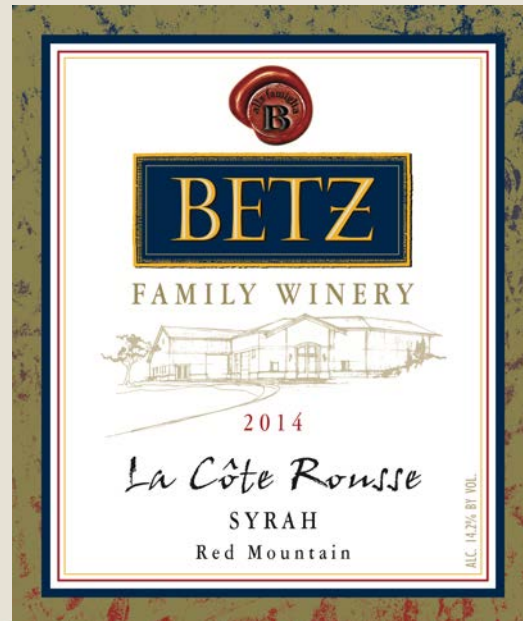
La Côte Rousse hails entirely from Red Mountain and reflects its origins: bold, dense, structured and profound. In a very short period of time, Red Mountain has distinguished itself among Washington's AVAs as the source of many of our states most compelling, age-worthy red wines. The origins of *La Côte Rousse* date back to 1999 with a single block of Syrah farmed at Scott Williams' Ranch at the End of the Road Vineyard. This hillside vineyard (planted entirely to the Phelps clone of Syrah) consistently yielded one of our densest, most texturally convincing Syrahs.

In the early 2000's, three additional vineyard blocks were added from Ciel du Cheval Vineyard, a literal stone's throw from Ranch at the End of the Road. Each block is planted to a different Syrah clone and each brings something unique to the blending table: Clone 383 provides the delicate perfume of cut flowers along with soft tannins; Clone 99 brings color, tension, and meatiness; Clone 174 adds hedonistic fruit flavors and spicy aromatics.

We picked these four blocks over a three-week period in 2014. Ideal weather conditions during

the vines' flowering period and the warm growing season resulted in even ripeness throughout each grape cluster, yielding berries remarkably even in size and color. As with *La Serenne*, the high level of grape and stem maturity in both clones 99 and 174 led to the decision to include 25-50% whole clusters during fermentation.

The 2014 *La Côte Rousse* displays the youthful, brooding, dark character we've come to expect from these Red Mountain sites. The superb ripening conditions are evident in its deep, penetrating core of blue and black fruits. The use of whole cluster fermentation has added additional spicy aromatics along with smoked meats, crushed herbs and wood spice.



CURRENT RATING:

Robert Parkers Wine Advocate - 96 POINTS

"From the hot, windswept slopes of Red Mountain, the 2014 Syrah la Cote Rousse is a serious, tight, backwards effort that won't be for those looking for instant gratification. Possessing classic Red Mountain red and black fruits, dried earth, pepper, dried spice and black olive characteristics, it's full-bodied, beautifully textured, has flat out awesome purity and impeccable balance. Give it 4-5 years of cellaring and drink it over the following decade or so." - Jeb Dunnuck

