

# BETZ

FAMILY WINERY

## 2014 *Bésolleil*, Southern Rhone Style Blend

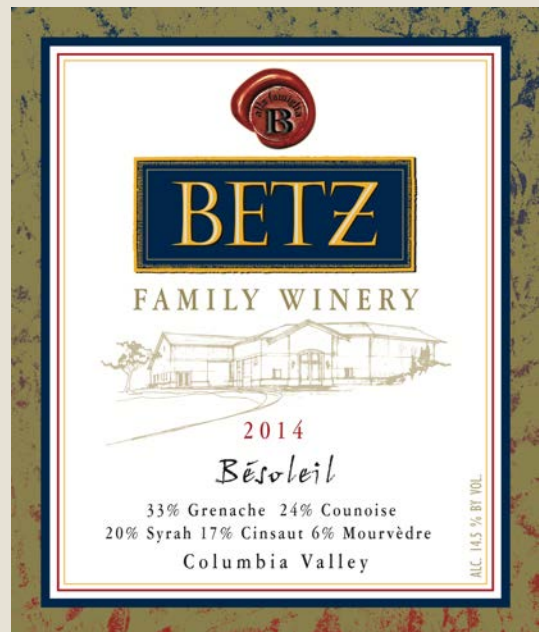
**The 2014 Vintage...** In the vineyards, 2014 marked the third year in a row for an early start for vine growth. Steady heat continued through July and August, leading to the earliest harvest ever for Betz Family Winery: we picked our first grapes on September 3rd. Over the following 4 weeks we harvested 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.

*Bésolleil* is our Spanish/French whimsy for "kissed by the sun". It alludes to the warm, sunny days in the south of France that impart an intensity of character to the Grenache grape and its southern Rhône relatives. Imagine the windswept vineyards of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, the inspiration for this wine, where Grenache thrives alongside a dozen or more other grape varieties.

The story of *Bésolleil* begins with our long-held belief that a precise marriage of soil and site can produce a profound expression of Grenache in Washington. We put that belief to the test with *Bésolleil's* first vintage in 2003. While the Grenache in the earliest vintages of *Bésolleil* was sourced from various vineyards throughout the Columbia Valley, two sites in particular (Olsen Vineyards in the Yakima Valley and Upland Vineyards on Snipes Mountain) have excelled as uniquely distinctive for Grenache. These two sites are the sources for the entirety of the Grenache in *Bésolleil* today.

Grenache is the star of *Bésolleil*, but it's not the whole story. Additional southern Rhône varieties have found their way into the blend and today the wine includes Counoise, Cinsault, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Our cellar treatment has also evolved in several ways in order to promote additional nuance from these southern Rhône gems. Larger, neutral oak cooperage of 300 and 500 liters provides less surface-to-volume ratio, resulting in slower evolution and less oak influence in the final wine.

Aging up to two-thirds of the blend in concrete vessels helps maintain a bright, fresh fruit character. This year's blend (33% Grenache, 24% Counoise, 20% Syrah, 17% Cinsault, and 6% Mourvèdre) represents the highest proportion of Counoise in *Bésolleil* to date and reflects the success of the variety in 2014. The typical ruby-red color of *Bésolleil* is deepened by the vibrant blue of Counoise, which also imparts notes of white and black pepper alongside an earthy, dusty expression so reminiscent of the southern Rhône.



### CURRENT RATING:

#### Robert Parkers Wine Advocate – 91 Points

*"Always an enjoyable, outstanding effort, the 2014 Grenache Besolleil offers classic notes of cherries, herbes de Provence, red plums and pepper in a fine, elegant, medium to full-bodied style. Drink it over the coming 7-8 years. While there's a long history of terrific wines from this estate, I think they've hit another level in the past few vintages, and these latest releases show a purity, elegance and textural quality not found in early bottlings. I'm sure this is in part due to the creation of a second wine, and even a stricter selection for all of the top cuvees. In short, don't miss a chance to try these wines." – Jeb Dunnuck*

