



REYNVAAN

The Contender

For those who have spent time touring tasting rooms in Washington, one thing is made very clear: the Missoula Floods, dating back over fifteen millennia, are a core source of the inimitable terroir reflected in the character of local wines. These floods left behind a diverse mix of silt, sand, and gravel which, over time, combined with volcanic material from nearby eruptions, resulting in a complex blend of alluvium, loess, and basalt throughout the valley.

The Reynvaan family set out to purchase what was once a wheat farm in this region in 2004. Prior to the purchase of the farm, the land was treated traditionally, with chemical fertilizers and pesticides. It was an obvious course of action to immediately begin implementing organic practices to regenerate soil health, which eventually ushered in a new era of biodiverse cover crops that led to noticeable improvements in vine health and fruit quality. The estate comprises two distinct vineyards, the “In the Rocks” and “Foothills in the Sun” vineyards. The “In the Rocks” vineyard, situated at an elevation of 800 feet and belonging to the Milton-Freewater AVA, features riverbed-tumbled basalt stones reminiscent of the iconic galets for which Chateauneuf-du-Pape is famous. Meanwhile, the “Foothills in the Sun” vineyard, located at a significantly higher elevation of 1,485 to 1,600 feet and at the base of the Blue Mountains, is comprised of a deep silty loam overtop basalt. With only a total of only 26.5 acres (less than 11HA) under vine, fruit is quite limited. As the Reynvaan’s put it, they are interested in “doing things the right way”, and their wines prove to be a testament to that.

The Contender Syrah is a viscous, oily, and savory expression of the In the Rock vineyard’s terroir. This cuvée is co-fermented with a small percentage of Marsanne, typically around 3%, contributing to its distinctive mouthfeel. It undergoes *élevage* in 25-30% new French barriques and puncheons, spending at least 6 months in new barrels before being transferred to second-fill barrels for an additional 6-12 months of maturation before bottling.

LOCATION

USA, Walla Walla Valley

SOIL

Basalt Stones, Alluvium

ELEVATION

~240 meters

FARMING

Sustainable

VARIETIES

Syrah, Marsanne

AGE OF VINES

19 years-old

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested and sorted, natural yeast fermentation, malolactic fermentation, bottled unfiltered

AGING

A minimum of 6 months in partial new French oak barrique and puncheons, raked to second-fill barrels and bottled after a total of 18 months. Aged in bottle 6 months before release

ACCOLADES

94 – 2021, James Suckling

98 – 2021, Jeb Dunnuck

98 – 2020, Jeb Dunnuck

93 – 2020, James Suckling

95+ – 2020, Vinous Media

93 – 2020, Wine Spectator

