

2009 Force Majeure Collaboration Series I

The Force Majeure 2009 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Collaboration Series I is a blend of two-thirds Cabernet Sauvignon with, notes McBride a bit oddly, “healthy doses of P(etit) V(erdot) and Cabernet Franc for our take on ‘Left Bank.’” (That said, there is also a bit of Merlot.) In any case, it’s vinified by Ben Smith of Cadence, for more on whose attraction to Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot consult my notes on recent offerings from that winery. The herbaceous side of these cepages dominates in the nose, though in a pleasantly pungent and reasonably complex way. Mint, arbor vitae, and cassis take on a chocolate coating on the glycerol-rich palate, and this finishes with an admirable counterpoint – somehow avoiding too bifurcated a sense – between bittersweetly herbal and torrefied, confitured character. I wouldn’t have guessed that the barrels were 70% new, and there is what I like to think of as a Washington-typical energetic...

- David Schildknecht (December, 2012)