

2009 Force Majeure Collaboration Series II

For Force Majeure's 2009 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Collaboration Series II the inspiration is Northern Rhone and vinificateur Ross Mickel (formerly of Betz) co-ferments with dollops of both Viognier and Roussanne. (Johnson says he goes through all of the available fruit to pick, based on flavor-interest, bunches of Viognier and Roussanne specifically for purposes of co-fermentation, though I can't say he convinced me that this could be anything but overkill given precisely that purpose, and the mere 1% of each employed.) Perhaps not surprisingly given the choice of Rhone clones of Syrah and the Rhone inspiration, this is initially a bit reduced, and as it opens is more meaty and savory in a saline, bloody way than the corresponding Collaboration III. Scents of mint, violet, gentian, black pepper, and cherry in confitured and distilled formats make for both a striking nose and persistent, polished, sappy, and energetic...

- **David Schildknecht (December, 2012)**