

## 2009 Force Majeure Collaboration Series III

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The Force Majeure 2009 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Collaboration Series III employs four clones of Syrah and was vinified by Mark McNeilly (with his assistant Mike Macmorran) of the Mark Ryan winery, who chose to utilize just one-third new barriques, in which the wine finished its primary fermentation. Vanilla and marzipan lend a surprisingly confectionary cast on a glycerol-rich palate to an amalgam of cherry preserves and creme de cassis, happily underlain by suggestions of roasted red meats that lend saliva inducement and savory counterpoint in a lingering, luscious finish. I was surprised at the extent to which this reflected its oak component given the stated percentage of new wood; but it was on this occasion that I made the following important discovery: in Washington, when vintners speak of “neutral” barrels, they may well – as in this instance – be referring to barrels that have been used only once previously! My intuition...

- David Schildknecht (December, 2012)