

2009 Force Majeure Collaboration Series IV

Force Majeure's 2009 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Collaboration Series IV is dominated by Merlot (supported by 23% Cabernet Sauvignon plus smaller amounts of other Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot) and vinified by Carolyn Lakewold of Donedei Wines, whose background and inspiration – accordingly to McBride and Johnson – is with Northern Italian wine (though I can't say I would have detected this). At 13.8% alcohol this is intentionally significantly lighter than its Collaboration Series siblings, and the absence of press wine was evidently intended to enhance textural refinement and relative levity. The nose here, though, is exceedingly spirituous as well as torrefied, for an impression that resembles dried cherries macerated in cognac, kirsch, and chocolate syrup, characteristics that combine for an almost liqueur-like though texturally not notably alluring palate impression. Toasted praline, cocoa powder, and caramelized wood...

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