The Benches (formerly known as Wallula Benches) is located in the Eastern corner of the Horse Heaven Hills AVA in the Wallula Gap. The vineyard sits on southward facing terraced blocks that range in elevation from 320 to 1,350 feet and overlook Wallula Lake which provides cooling breezes to moderate extreme summer temperatures. This area is known for its rich, fertile Shano silt loam soils which were deposited during the Missoula floods; it also benefits from uninterrupted senior water rights to the Columbia River.

The 2012 vintage is comprised of fruit from several different vineyards, predominately The Benches, Alder Ridge, Seven Hills, and Les Collines. The addition of Merlot, Malbec, and Petit Verdot contributed to the blend's full body and firm tannins. Chocolate and black fruits like blackberry and currant take center stage in this smooth and balanced wine. After a rich entrance fruit and earth blend seamlessly through a lingering finish. Enjoy now through 2025.

The Process:

Fermentation techniques included cold soaking, punch downs, and pump overs, and extended maceration. Aging took place over 16 months in both American and French oak barrels.

Vintage Notes:

2012 brought a return to the classic eastern Washington vintage conditions and a departure from the previous two cooler years experienced in the area. Budbreak was slightly ahead of average and a cool start to the summer slightly delayed vine development. In late July, warm and dry conditions returned and lasted through mid-October, allowing the fruit to ripen in an ideal situation.

The Wine:

North by Northwest represents wines made from inland grape growing appellations of the Columbia River Basin of Oregon and Washington. The Columbia Valley is renowned for the ability to grow high quality grapes in an area of unique terroir. NxNW wines are fruit driven, flavorful and aromatic, with balanced structure. Meticulous vineyard selection, skillful blending, and uncompromised commitment to varietal expression yield wines with unique character, a combination exemplified by our NxNW series.

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