



VARIETAL & VINEYARD: This Southern Rhône-style wine is 84% Grenache, 14% Syrah and 2% Mourvedre from our creekside vineyards planted in 1998. The primary component of this blend comes from a 2.9 acre block, planted to three clones of Grenache Noir. We obtained the budwood from Tablas Creek and Alban Vineyards. These clones, selected from Chateauneuf-du-Pape, give darker color and better structure than the majority of Grenache planted in California. The Syrah used in this blend comes from Northern Rhône clones (174, 877, 383 and 470) while the Mourvedre (budwood also from Tablas Creek) comes from three rows planted alongside our Grenache. Our vines are planted on low-vigor rootstock to 4'x 6' spacing.

VINTAGE/HARVEST: 2005 is unquestionably our best vintage to date for Grenache and Mourvedre. Late spring rain in May and June caused a considerable amount of bunch shatter (bunches with berries missing, resulting in low yield), which in turn provided us with the darkest Grenache grapes we have ever seen. A moderate growing season allowed us to patiently wait until the grapes were very ripe, or as the French would say, *surmaturite*, which is when Grenache develops its most interesting flavors. We harvested the grapes at an average of 27-degree brix October 20th through October 26th. We normally drop 50 to 60% of the crop, limiting the yield to 7 pounds per vine, but in 2005 Mother Nature did it for us.

VINIFICATION: Upon crushing into two small, open-top tanks, we drain a portion of the juice (10 to 15%), a method commonly used in the Rhône called *saignée*, to intensify color and structure. After a five day cold-soak, the fermentation begins spontaneously with indigenous yeast. The open-top tanks allow us to work the must by punching down each tank twice daily. As is done in Chateauneuf-du-Pape, we blend Syrah and Mourvedre for color, body and complexity. This is the first year we have aged this wine in 620 gallon foudres, which are commonly used in the Rhône. These large barrels preserve the vineyard character by minimizing both oak extraction and oxidation. It is bottled **unfined** and **unfiltered**.

STYLE/DESCRIPTION: Clearly our most concentrated, full-bodied and structured Grenache blend to date. It has intense aromatics of raspberry, blackberry, tar, pepper, licorice, and dried herbs. On the palate it has a juicy, silky texture with firm but entirely ripe tannins. This is, by far, my favorite wine we've ever made here at Unti. It has the stuff to last at least 5 to 7 years, but should really start showing its stuff in two years.

Mick

Harvested: 10/20/05 through 10/26/05
Total acidity: 0.57g/100ml
pH: 3.81
Aging: 13 months 620 gal French oak foudres

Blend: 84% Grenache, 14% Syrah, 2% Mourvedre
Alcohol: 14.9%
Bottled: 12/5/06
Cases Produced: 1,034 cases
