



**VARIETAL & VINEYARD:** This Southern Rhône-style wine is 75% Grenache, 13% Mourvedre, and 12% Syrah and is from our creekside vineyard, planted in 1998. The primary component of this blend comes from a 2.9 acre block, planted to three clonal selections of Grenache Noir. We obtained the bud-wood of the Grenache Noir from Tablas Creek and Alban Vineyards. These clonal selections, all from Châteauneuf-du-Pape, give darker color and better structure than the majority of the Grenache clones planted in California. The Syrah used in this blend comes from Northern Rhône clones (174 and 877) while the Mourvedre comes from three rows planted alongside our Grenache. Our vines are planted on low-vigor rootstock to 4'x 6' spacing.

**VINTAGE/HARVEST:** 2008 will be best remembered for its spring frost and some extreme summer temperatures. Both factors caused some uneven ripening in the grapes, challenging our crop thinning efforts. We normally drop 50 to 60% of the crop regardless, in order to limit the yield to 6 pounds per vine. This concentrates flavors and helps achieve full ripeness without sacrificing acidity. We began harvesting our Grenache and Mourvedre October 16<sup>th</sup> through October 23<sup>rd</sup>, a tad later than usual considering the low yield of the vines.

**VINIFICATION:** Upon crushing the grapes into 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 Châteauneuf-du-Pape, we blend Syrah and Mourvedre for color, body, and complexity. 40% of this wine was fermented using whole clusters. Retaining the stems helped provide bright fruit and pepper aromas. We aged this wine in 620 gallon foudres, also commonly used in the Rhône. These large barrels preserve the vineyard character by minimizing both oak extraction and oxidation.

**STYLE/DESCRIPTION:** This 2008 Grenache will appeal to those who love the spicy, smoky side of Southern Rhône wines. In fact, our 2008 Grenache reminds me of what Châteauneuf-du-Pape is like in cooler vintages. It features complexity and elegance over fruit and heady alcohol. This medium bodied wine should age nicely over the next 2-3 years.

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**Harvested:** 10/6/08 through 10/13/08

**Total acidity:** 5.35g/L

**pH:** 3.85

**Aging:** 13 months 620 gal foudres, 2 yr-old barrels

**Blend:** 75% Grenache, 13% Mourvedre, 12% Syrah

**Alcohol:** 14.5%

**Bottled:** 12/6/09

**Cases Produced:** 715

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