



**VARIETAL & VINEYARD:** This Southern Rhône-style wine is 76% Grenache, 12% Mourvedre, and 12% Syrah, planted on our property in 1998. The primary component of this blend comes from a 2.9 acre block, planted to three clonal selections of Grenache Noir, from bud wood obtained from Tablas Creek and Alban Vineyards. These clonal selections of Châteauneuf-du-Pape varieties, give darker color and better structure than the majority of Grenache planted in California. The Syrah in this blend comes from Northern Rhône clones 174 and 877 located beside the winery, while the Mourvedre and Grenache comes from our creek-side vineyard. Our vines are planted on low-vigor rootstock to 4'x 6' spacing.

**VINTAGE/HARVEST:** 2009 will remain in our memory as a near-perfect vintage, until a mid-October rainstorm. Warm, dry weather in late winter/early spring, was followed by a cooler-than-normal growing season. 2009 was by far the smallest crop we've ever had for Grenache, due to a naturally low fruit set and our own extreme crop thinning. The small crop accelerated ripening such that we were able to harvest one section of our vineyard October 13<sup>th</sup>, prior to the rain. One remaining batch of Grenache while not as concentrated, was still complex enough to include in our best blend, while two others were de-classified into Petit Frere. The Syrah portion of the blend was harvested October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Mourvedre on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

**WINEMAKING:** 75% of the grapes were de-stemmed and lightly crushed into small open-top tanks. The remaining 25% were whole cluster fermented for added structure and aromatic complexity. Fermentation started without inoculation after approximately one week of cold soak. The open-top tanks allow us to work the must by punching down each tank twice daily until dry. After pressing, we stirred barrels weekly to keep fine lees in suspension to improve mouth-feel and assist malo-lactic fermentation. As is done in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, we blend Syrah and Mourvedre for color, body, and complexity. We aged this wine in 620 gallon foudres, commonly used in the Rhône. These large barrels preserve the vineyard character by minimizing both oak extraction and oxidation.

**STYLE/DESCRIPTION:** Our 2009 Grenache is a fruitier version of our 2007 vintage. It is perhaps a tad less tannic, but it is still a powerful example of a Dry Creek Southern Rhône blend. It is already showing well at this early stage in its life. This medium to full-bodied wine should age nicely over the next 2-3 years.

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**Harvested:** 10/13/09 and 10/20/09

**Total acidity:** 5.35g/L

**pH:** 3.65

**Aging:** 13 mos 620 gal Foudres, 2 yr-old barrels

**Blend:** 76% Grenache, 12% Mourvedre, 12% Syrah

**Alcohol:** 14.4%

**Bottled:** 1/13/11

**Cases Produced:** 595

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