



*Elizabeth Spencer*TM

2005 Grenache Mendocino

Appellation: Mendocino
Varietal Blend: 95% Grenache, 5% Durif
Production: 6 Barrels
Winemakers: Matthew Rorick and Spencer Graham
Release Date: March 1, 2007

Winemaker's Notes

Bright garnet in color, with aromas of rose petals, strawberries, vanilla, white pepper, blueberry and a hint of cedar that leap from the glass. Supple and round on the entry, then grip builds under layers of bright bing cherry, cranberry and the slightest suggestion of cafe mocha. Fruit, tannin, and a creamy mouthfeel intermingle through the finish and demand another taste. A wonderful example of the finesse attainable in a lighter-bodied, well-balanced red wine.

Winemaking

Upon arrival at the winery, our Grenache was destemmed and placed in a small open-top fermenter. It then underwent a 6 day cold soak in order to extract as much of the bright fruit flavors in the skins and pulp before fermentation. Allowed to ferment with its native yeast, this wine was punched down by hand, pressed just before dryness, and completed fermentation in barrel. This allowed us to avoid over-extracting the tannins found in the skins and seeds, which are found in ample quantities in this variety and can lead to bitterness and unpleasant astringency if not carefully regulated. We opted to leave this wine in barrel for 14 months, allowing the tannins to integrate seamlessly into the body of the wine and provide the finishing touch to the wine's wonderful balance.

Vineyards

The Grenache comes from the Bartolome vineyard in Mendocino, east of Ukiah. Rough, stony soils force these vines to struggle through the growing season, and the resultant tiny berries yield a bounty of aromatics and exuberant flavors. Grenache vines can produce enormous amounts of fruit even on sites such as this, and we work closely with the Bartolome brothers to regulate crop size and ensure that each plant carries only as many clusters as it can perfectly ripen.

Vintage

The wet spring and cool growing season of 2005 allowed our Grenache vines to slowly develop the flavors in their clusters without losing any of the fruit's effusive aromatics and natural acidity. The vibrancy and roundness of the wine produced in this vintage is in no small part due to the unique and atypical climactic conditions of the vintage.