



Elizabeth Spencer[™]

2006 Grenache Mendocino

Appellation: Mendocino
Varietal Blend: 95% Grenache, 5% Durif
Production: 14 Barrels
Winemakers: Spencer Graham
Release Date: October 1, 2007

Winemaker's Notes

Deep garnet in color. Aromas of black cherry, black tea, bergamot, lilac and spice mingle in the glass. As with the 2005 bottling of this wine, the 2006 is supple and round on the entry, with grip and texture building beneath layers of ripe plum, Bing cherry. This mouthfilling wine is firm and refreshing on the finish.

Winemaking

Grapes were hand-harvested in late October, removed from the stems and placed in a small open-top tank. After light maceration, the skins and the pulp sat together for six days prior to fermentation in order to extract as much of the bright fruit flavors as possible. Native yeasts were encouraged, and the wine was punched down by hand, pressed just before dryness and moved to barrel to complete fermentation. Barrel-aged for 14 months, the tannins integrated seamlessly with the body of the wine prior to bottling.

Vineyards

Our Grenache is from a single vineyard with very stony soils located in Mendocino just east of Ukiah. Due to the rough terrain, the vines struggle through the growing season creating grape clusters with very tiny berries yet full of exuberant aromatics and flavors. The soils here are a textbook example of the theory proving that growing vinifera fruit in rugged terroir does achieve the fullest, most complex components in the resultant wine.

Typically, Grenache vines produce an abundance of fruit, therefore we work closely with the grower in order to regulate crop size and to ensure that each vine carries just the right amount of clusters.

Vintage

For the second year in a row, there was a wet spring and a cooler-than-average growing season – until a two week heat wave struck in mid-summer. Thankfully, Grenache is a late-ripening variety and, as such, had not yet gone through the phase of growth called “veraison” during which the skins soften and the fruit becomes much more vulnerable to extreme heat. This allowed our 2006 Grenache to safely weather the high temperatures and to continue a slow, evenly paced ripening until we began to harvest in late October.