

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD



The VINformer *Winter 2018-2019*

In Memoriam: Robert Haas
1927-2018



Fall in the vineyard

2018 Harvest Report

On October 25, we brought in the last lingering blocks of Mourvèdre, Grenache, and Counoise. It wasn't as though there was a threat of imminent rain, or heat, or anything else. No, it was just that the grapes were ready. That made a fitting end to the 2018 harvest, which unfolded under the best conditions we can remember this millennium.

A few notes on the 2018 harvest (for the full harvest report, see the blog):

- Yields averaged 3.32 tons per acre, down 10% from 2017 but still 10% above our ten-year average.
- Both our 22.80 average Brix level and our 3.62 average harvest pH are near long-term averages.

See **HARVEST**, page 3

December is must! Month

Once again, Tablas Creek will donate \$1 to must! charities for each bottle purchased directly from us (in our tasting room, online or by phone) during the month of December. 100% of the funds generated will go directly to help those in need in our community. For more information about the great work must! is doing, please visit their website at mustcharities.org



by Jason Haas

My dad, Tablas Creek's founder Robert Haas, passed away peacefully at his home in Templeton on March 18 of this year. About a month later, we hosted a celebration of his life at the vineyard. We tried to make it an event he would have enjoyed: good food and wine, not too formal, a chance for people to tell stories or reminisce in different ways. About 350 people came, from as far away as France and Vermont, wine folks from all over California, and a great representation of the local wine community. The mood was one of appreciation, not sadness, which I thought was great. Yes, we are all sad to lose him, but at almost 91 he had a great and long life and laid the foundation for many others to succeed after him.

I kicked off the remarks with my own thoughts on my dad. This was, more or less, what I said to the group:

I am so honored to see all of you here, and to have heard from so many of you – and so many people who couldn't be here today – about how my dad had touched your lives. It's been one of the really nice things in what has been a difficult month. I remember, when Meghan and I were

See **ROBERT HAAS**, page 6

Focus Varietal: Grenache Noir

Grenache is the most widely planted grape in the southern Rhône Valley, and the second most planted world-wide. Like many other varieties (think Pinot) it has red, white, and even pink-skinned variants. It is most often blended (with Syrah and Mourvèdre in France and Australia, and with Tempranillo in Rioja), and forms the core of the wines of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, where it represents 70% of the appellation's acreage.

Early History

Grenache appears to have originated in Spain, most likely in the northern province of Aragon, and ampelographers believe that Grenache was the foundation of Aragon's excellent *vin rouge du pays*. The kingdom of Aragon brought Grenache with it as its influence expanded into territories like Roussillon and Sardinia, and by the early 18th century, the variety had expanded into Languedoc and Provence.

Grenache benefited from the phylloxera epidemic of the late 19th century, as in regions from Rioja to the Rhône, the hardy, easy to graft Grenache replaced local varieties, most notably the previously-abundant (but difficult to graft) Mourvèdre.

Grenache was brought to California in the 1860s, where its vigor and resistance to drought made it popular. It came to occupy second place in vineyard planting after Carignan and was an element in wine producers' branded field blends.

In recent years, as the demand for jug wine has dried up, Grenache plantings in California have declined, from a peak of over 20,000 acres to about 4,500 acres today. At the same time, the grape has come into demand by Rhône specialists, and more than 1000 new acres have been planted in the last 15 years in high quality coastal appellations, particularly

in Santa Barbara County and Paso Robles.

Grenache at Tablas Creek

When we began Tablas Creek in 1990, we were not satisfied with the quality of California Grenache, which we believed had degenerated from years



of selection for high productivity. So we

imported our Grenache cuttings (along with its cousin Grenache Blanc) from France, where Jacques Perrin at Château de Beaucastel had worked tirelessly to regenerate high quality Grenache vines.

While all varieties benefit from vine age,

More than 1000 new acres of Grenache have been planted in the last 15 years.

we have found this particularly true with Grenache. Our early harvests of Grenache showed less depth than we wanted, and had drying tannins that made blending difficult. Only since the 2005 vintage have we been really happy with the variety's performance, and only since 2006 have we felt Grenache balanced enough to produce as a varietal wine.

Grenache in the Vineyard and Cellar

Grenache is a vigorous variety with upright growth, well suited to the "gobelet" training famous in Châteauneuf du Pape. At Tablas Creek, our newer Grenache plantings are mostly head trained; elsewhere on the vineyard, we cultivate it in double cordon fashion. The varietal's vigor gives it the potential to be a heavy producer. Despite our shoot thinning, we are usually obliged to fruit-prune during the growing seasons to keep to our target yields: between 3 and 3.5 tons per acre for trellised Grenache and between 2 and 2.5 tons per acre for head-trained.

Grenache ripens in the middle of the ripening cycle, after Syrah but before Cournoise and Mourvèdre. At harvest, it is notable for its high acidity even at relatively high sugar levels. In a typical year, we would begin to harvest Grenache at the end of September and finish in mid-October.

In the cellar, we typically ferment Grenache in closed fermenters, to counteract Grenache's tendency toward oxidation. For the same reason, we prefer to age Grenache in 1200-gallon oak foudres, whose thicker oak staves permit less oxygen to penetrate the wine.

Flavors and Aromas

Grenache's flavors are most typically currant, cherry, and raisin, and its aromas are of black pepper, menthol, and licorice, with characteristically vibrant acids that frame the fruit. Depending on vintage characteristics, Grenache is either our number two or three varietal in our signature

Esprit de Tablas, behind Mourvèdre and sometimes Syrah, and opens up those more closed, reductive varieties. Grenache also serves as the lead grape in our *Côtes de Tablas*, and we have produced a varietal *Grenache* in about two-thirds of vintages since 2006. 🍇

Tablas Creek Vineyard Vintage Chart 2000-2017 Vintages

HARVEST, from page 1

WHITES	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Esprit de Beaucastel/Tablas Blanc		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Côtes de Tablas Blanc			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Patelin de Tablas Blanc																		
Roussanne		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Grenache Blanc			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Vermentino			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Viognier																		
Picpoul Blanc																		
Marsanne																		
Clairette Blanche																		
Picardan																		
Antithesis Chardonnay																		
Bergeron																		
ROSÉ	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Rosé/Dianthus	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Patelin de Tablas Rosé																		
REDS	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Esprit de Beaucastel/Tablas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Côtes de Tablas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Patelin de Tablas																		
Syrah																		
Mourvèdre																		
Grenache																		
Counoise																		
Terret Noir																		
Tannat																		
Pinot Noir																		
"Full Circle" Pinot Noir																		
Cabernet																		
En Gobelet																		
Le Complot																		
Founders Reserve																		
Panoplie	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
SWEET WINES	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Petit Manseng																		
Vin de Paille																		
Vin de Paille Quintessence																		
Vin de Paille Sacrèrouge																		

Vintage Chart Key	
■	More Aging Recommended
■	Drinking Well: Youthful
■	Drinking Well: Mature
■	Late Maturity (Drink Up)
■	Decanting recommended
■	Hold - Closed Phase
■	Past its prime
■	Not made
■	Not yet bottled

Updated September 2018

Recent Reviews



We were excited to read Josh Reynolds’ annual reviews of our wines on Vinous.com, focusing on the 2016 and 2017 vintages. He called Tablas Creek “the iconic Paso Robles producer whose wines continue to set the pace for elegance in the region”. Highlights included the 2016 *Esprit de Tablas* (94-95 points), 2016 *En Gobelet* (94 points), 2016 *Full Circle* (93 points), 2017 *Esprit de Tablas Blanc* (93-94 points), and 2017 *Panoplie* (95-97 points).

Additionally, we are thrilled that one of our rosés has made it into a year-end “Top 100” list for the first time. Wine & Spirits Magazine recognized the 2017 *Patelin de Tablas Rosé*.

The full review and other press are at tablascreek.com/news

• A fairly cool early summer (through June) and harvest season (starting mid-August) were wrapped around a scorching 6-week mid-summer stretch, but the heat broke in time for the vines to recover.

• Harvest’s duration (55 days) was exactly at our average this millennium, but given that we only harvested 10 tons the first 10 days, the other 45 days were intense.

• We made our first *Vin de Paille* from Roussanne since 2012.

• Our flock has already been reintroduced into the vineyard, and we expect 200 lambs this winter.

In character, it’s early to tell what things will be like, but so far, we’re excited. Senior Assistant Winemaker Chelsea Franchi summed up the vintage: “I think it’s going to be a really strong year for reds; the Mourvèdre and Counoise are coloring up fast, which is usually an indicator of a good vintage, and the flavors are powerful and deep. And the whites are insanely aromatic and floral.” We’ll know more, of course, when we get to blending in the spring. 🍷



Happy Holidays from Eli (13) and Sebastian (11) Haas and the rest of the Tablas Creek Vineyard family!

2018 HOLIDAY GIFT PACKS

SHIPPING INCLUDED



At Tablas Creek, we want to help you give the gift of Tablas Creek, with five special holiday gift packs. We are including shipping, and a special decorative gift box, at no extra charge to any address in any of the 41 states we can ship to. For gift orders, we are happy to enclose a holiday message. These special holiday packs will only be available for pickup or shipment until the end of December. To order, or to give a gift VINsider membership, visit tablascreek.com or call 805.237.1231.

Esprit de Tablas Duo Gift Pack (2 bottles)

A bottle each of the newest release of our signature wines:

- 2016 *Esprit de Tablas*
- 2016 *Esprit de Tablas Blanc*

\$105 per pack, and \$84 per pack for VINsiders.

Great Whites Gift Pack (3 bottles)

A bottle of each of our popular white blends:

- 2017 *Patelin de Tablas Blanc*
- 2017 *Côtes de Tablas Blanc*
- 2016 *Esprit de Tablas Blanc*

\$100 per pack, and \$80 per pack for VINsiders.

Library Vertical of Esprit Gift Pack (3 bottles)

A bottle each of three vintages of our flagship red wine:

- 2010 *Esprit de Beaucastel*
- 2011 *Esprit de Beaucastel*
- 2012 *Esprit de Beaucastel*

\$225 per pack, and \$180 per pack for VINsiders.

Unusual Varietals Gift Pack (4 bottles)

A bottle each of four limited production wines, all difficult or impossible to find in distribution:

- 2017 *Picpoul Blanc*
- 2017 *Vermentino*
- 2016 *Counoise*
- 2016 *Mourvèdre*

\$132 per pack, and \$105.60 per pack for VINsiders.

Great Reds Gift Pack (4 bottles)

A bottle of each of our popular red blends, plus the limited production wine club *En Gobelet*:

- 2016 *Patelin de Tablas*
- 2016 *Côtes de Tablas*
- 2016 *En Gobelet*
- 2016 *Esprit de Tablas*

\$170 per pack, and \$136 per pack for VINsiders.

Seated Flight Tasting

Join us in our semi-private room for a seated flight tasting. Enjoy a flight of six wines and the chance to compare and contrast at your own pace. Choose from classic (mixed), all-red, or all-white flights, each including multiple vintages of our flagship *Esprit de Tablas*, small-production wines and winery exclusives. \$25 per person; \$10 for wine club members; fee waived with a \$75 purchase. Because of our seating constraints, this experience is limited to groups of 8 or fewer. For reservations or more information, visit www.tablascreek.com or call 805.237.1231 x39.





WINE ORDER FORM

WINTER 2018 -2019

DISCOUNTS

VINsiders members receive a discount of 25% on orders of 12 bottles or more and 20% on orders of fewer than 12 bottles. VINdependents receive a discount of 20% on orders of a case or more and 10% on orders of fewer than 12 bottles. Non-Club members receive a 10% discount on orders of 12 bottles or more.

SHIPPING

Shipping included on orders that include 6 or more bottles of *Esprit* and/or *Esprit Blanc*.

CA*
 1-2 bottles: \$10.00
 3- 6 bottles: \$20.00
 7-12 bottles: \$30.00

AZ, CO, ID*, MT, NM, NV*, OR, WA*, WY
 1-2 bottles: \$15.00
 3-6 bottles: \$30.00
 7-12 bottles: \$40.00

AK, DC, FL, GA*, HI, IA, IL, IN, KS*, MA, MD*, ME*, MI*, MN, MO, NC*, ND, NE*, NH*, NY*, OH*, PA*, SC*, TN*, TX*, VA*, VT*, WI, WV*
 1-2 bottles: \$20.00
 3- 6 bottles: \$35.00
 7-12 bottles: \$45.00

*State and local taxes apply

LEGAL

Due to federal and state laws, we are permitted to ship to addresses in the above states only. Wines may only be shipped to and received by adults at least 21 years of age. **An adult signature is required at delivery.**

WINE	QUANTITY	LIST PRICE	VINDEPENDENT PRICE	VINSIDER PRICE	TOTAL
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SPECIAL PACKAGES [SHIPPING INCLUDED; DETAILS ON P. 4]

ESPRIT DUO GIFT PACK (2 bottles)	_____	\$105.00	\$94.50	\$84.00	_____
GREAT WHITES GIFT PACK (3 bottles)	_____	\$100.00	\$90.00	\$80.00	_____
LIBRARY VERTICAL GIFT PACK (3 bottles)	_____	\$225.00	\$202.50	\$180.00	_____
UNUSUAL VARIETALS GIFT PACK (4 bottles)	_____	\$132.00	\$118.80	\$105.60	_____
GREAT REDS GIFT PACK (4 bottles)	_____	\$170.00	\$153.00	\$136.00	_____

WHITE WINES

ESPRIT DE TABLAS BLANC 2016 (12 btl limit)	_____	\$45.00	\$40.50	\$36.00	_____
ESPRIT DE TABLAS BLANC 2015	_____	\$45.00	\$40.50	\$36.00	_____
CÔTES DE TABLAS BLANC 2017	_____	\$30.00	\$27.00	\$24.00	_____
PICPOUL BLANC 2017 (6 bottle limit)	_____	\$30.00	\$27.00	\$24.00	_____
GRENAHE BLANC 2017 (6 bottle limit)	_____	\$30.00	\$27.00	\$24.00	_____
PATELIN DE TABLAS BLANC 2017	_____	\$25.00	\$22.50	\$20.00	_____
ROUSSANNE 2016	_____	\$35.00	\$31.50	\$28.00	_____

RED WINES

ESPRIT DE TABLAS 2016 (12 bottle limit)	_____	\$60.00	\$54.00	\$48.00	_____
ESPRIT DE TABLAS 2015	_____	\$60.00	\$54.00	\$48.00	_____
ESPRIT DE TABLAS 2014 (6 bottle limit)	_____	\$65.00	\$58.50	\$52.00	_____
MOURVÈDRE 2016 (6 bottle limit)	_____	\$40.00	\$36.00	\$32.00	_____
CÔTES DE TABLAS 2016	_____	\$35.00	\$31.50	\$28.00	_____
PATELIN DE TABLAS 2016	_____	\$25.00	\$22.50	\$20.00	_____

SUBTOTAL _____

CASE DISCOUNT (IF APPLICABLE) _____

STATE AND LOCAL TAXES WILL BE APPLIED

SHIPPING _____

ORDER TOTAL _____

I certify that I am 21 years or older.

BILLING & SHIPMENT: EITHER

VINsider Name: _____

VINsider Number: _____

Signature: _____

Bill to my credit card on file Ship to my address on file

OR

BILL TO:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

SHIP TO:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

CREDIT CARD:

MC/Visa/AmEx #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

To order: return form to Tablas Creek Vineyard, 9339 Adelaida Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446 or fax 805.237.1314 :: email orders@tablascreek.com :: order online at www.tablascreek.com

thinking about moving out here almost 20 years ago, that getting the chance to work with my dad while he was still actively involved in Tablas Creek was my main motivation in making the move when we did. If I'd waited a few years, and something had happened to him, I would have regretted that forever. But I wasn't sure exactly what it was that he did that had made him successful. After having had the pleasure of working with him for 15 years, I think it boiled down to three things:

First, he generated more ideas per amount of time spent at work than anyone else I've ever worked with. This wasn't always easy – there were times when it drove us all nuts, because he would have a new good idea while we were still trying to implement the last one – but what a great foundation for any business.

Second, he was willing to lead by example. Whether this was going out well into his 80s and carrying a wine bag up and down the New York subway stairs showing Tablas Creek, or being the first to stand up and put in money to get the 11 new Paso Robles AVAs off the ground, or in creating the winery partners program to support the Foundation for the Performing Arts Center, on whose board he served into his 90s, if the cause was something he believed in, he was willing to put his own time, effort, and money into making sure that cause succeeded.

Third, he believed in people. One of the hallmarks of all the companies he founded was that people stayed and made a career there. He did this by giving the people he hired the authority to make the right decisions in their area of expertise, by allocating them the resources they needed, and by providing them vision without micro-managing the details. There are people here today from Vineyard Brands who remember me coming home from Little League games and walking through the sales meeting dinners that he and my mom were hosting, in uniform. A dozen of them made the trip out here, many of whom are still there 30 years later, running the company that he founded.

My dad also had a pretty clear sense of what mattered, and what didn't. I remember once, getting a semi-critical review in a class I took in high school, that said (with the implication that my judgments were perhaps less nuanced than they should be) that I had "little use for fools". He read it and said, "well, I'm not sure there is much use for fools. I wouldn't worry about it."

But in the end, what I'm going to hold on to most about my dad was his essential optimism. He started this vineyard when he was already in his early 60s. He did it in a way that guaranteed that

we wouldn't see any wine for a decade. And for him, none of that mattered. It was an interesting and worthwhile thing to do. He was confident that he could figure out the pieces he didn't yet know. The fact that we would be making wine from grapes that most Americans didn't know and couldn't pronounce, and that we would be blending these grapes into wines that didn't really have a category in the marketplace, were just details that could be overcome by perseverance and force of will. That perseverance and force of will hadn't ever let him down. And they wouldn't here either.



All kids, I think, grow up thinking that what they grow up with is normal. Your dad is "Dad". He does the things he does because that's the way the world works. I will forever be grateful that I got the chance to work with my dad as an adult, and see him through the eyes of the people he worked with and inspired. And I believe that the reason he was successful in business was the same as why he was a great dad and a great friend. You always knew where you stood. You always knew that if you needed his support, you'd have it. And you knew that when he said something, he meant it.

I have one story I'd like to end with. I remember, not long after we moved out here, walking out into the middle of the vineyard here with my dad. Most of the vines here were still young. He was in his mid-70s. He stopped for a moment and waved generally toward the vineyard and said, "you know, I didn't build this for me. I'm not going to be around when it's at maturity. I didn't even really build it for you. But it should be amazing for your kids."

Thank you all for coming today. I am really looking forward to hearing your stories. It's been an honor to spend as much time inside my dad's life as I have these last two decades. Thank you all for being a part of it.

A theme that was repeated both in the articles that were written after his death and in the tributes that people gave at his memorial was that my dad was a builder: someone who didn't just come up with ideas (though he did that, for sure) but oversaw the creation of structures that were set up to succeed long-term. The impacts of that foundation-building were in full evidence at the party, with people there to remember his work not just at Tablas Creek, but as an importer, as an advocate for the Paso Robles wine community, and as a patron of the arts.

One indication of his status as a builder: at the event, there were some 65 people who had worked for him either at Vineyard Brands or at Tablas Creek. By my rough calculations, those 65 people had

Upcoming Events

February 10, 2019 2009 Horizontal Tasting

In 2014 we began an annual tradition of looking back with a decade's perspective at how a broad range of wines have developed. In February, we will turn our attention to the 2009 vintage. At this horizontal tasting (horizontal referring to tasting several wines from a single estate made in a single year, as opposed to vertical, which would imply a tasting of the same wine across several vintages), you can join us as we look back at 2009 with the perspective of ten years' time. The cost is \$60 for wine club members and \$75 for guests and non-members. This event is sure to fill up early. To reserve, email events@tablascreek.com or call 805.237.1231 x36.

February 17, 2019 Paso Robles Rhône Rangers Experience

Tablas Creek will join the 50+ members of the Paso Robles Chapter of the Rhône Rangers for the 2019 Paso Robles Rhône Rangers Experience. This fun-filled and information-rich day will include a "Rhône Essentials" seminar, a Vintners' Lunch, and the Grand Tasting and Silent Auction. The day's events will take place at Rava Winery. Tickets for the seminar and lunch are \$95, and seminar/lunch attendees will receive free entry into the Grand Tasting. Tickets for the Grand Tasting are \$45. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit rhonerangers.org.

1:00 PM

February 23, 2019 Festival Mozaic *Notable Encounter* Concert and Dinner

We are proud each year to sponsor Festival Mozaic and the *Notable Encounter* series: intimate concerts and discussions paired with gourmet food and great wines in wonderful venues. This year, we're sponsoring a weekend of chamber music focusing on Felix Mendelssohn. Join us for a gourmet farm-to-table dinner (paired with Tablas Creek wine) prepared by Field to Table Catering at a private home in Varian Ranch, outside Arroyo Grande. The evening will also include an interactive presentation, performance, and discussion by Music Director Scott Yoo and other festival musicians, who will then join us all for dinner and to mingle. For more information or to buy tickets, visit festivalmozaic.com or call 805.781.3009.

5:30 PM

April 14, 2019 Blending Seminar

Join us for our annual blending seminar! Winemaker Neil Collins will lead a barrel tasting of the individual varietals and a discussion of our blending process, and then set you loose with graduated cylinders to produce your own blend. This event is extremely popular and sells out quickly. The cost is \$45 for wine club members and \$60 for guests. Space is limited and reservations are required; contact us at events@tablascreek.com or 805.237.1231 x30.

10:00 AM

Tablas on Tour: National Events

December 19, 2018

Wine Dinner
The Padre Hotel
Bakersfield, California
www.thepadrehotel.com

January 7-10, 2019

Wine Speak Paso Robles
Atascadero, California
www.winespeakpaso.com
805.458.8939

March 15-17, 2019

Vintage Paso: Zinfandel and Other Wild Wines
Paso Robles, California
www.pasowine.com
805.239.8463

March 17, 2019

Family Winemakers Tasting
Del Mar Fairgrounds
Del Mar, California
www.familywinemakers.org

March 26-27, 2019

Rhone Rangers DC Road Show
City Winery
Washington, DC
www.rhonerangers.org

April 5-6, 2019

Bassin Family Memorial California Release Tasting
Mandarin Oriental Hotel
Washington, DC
www.bassins.com

April 10-11, 2019

Paso Wine in the Sunshine State
Palm Beach, Florida
Miami, Florida
www.pasowine.com

April 23-24, 2019

Rhone Rangers Boston Road Show
City Winery
Boston, Massachusetts
www.rhonerangers.org

Meet the Tablas Creek Team! Questions for Jordan Lonborg, Viticulturist

Jordan plays a key part in the organic and biodynamic farming program here at Tablas Creek, as well as being chief liaison with the growers we partner with for fruit for the Patelin program. He's often seen traipsing throughout the vineyard with his dog Miles (named

Where were you born and raised?

I was born and raised in Scituate, Massachusetts, a little beach town about 30 miles south of Boston.

What is your role as Viticulturist?

I'm here mainly to improve the overall health of the vineyard while maintaining that level of health moving forward. We're using different pruning techniques, fertilizing tactics, and cover crop choices. Also, the customer relations with our growers for the Patelin program. I work towards maintaining those relationships.

Can you talk a little about biodynamic farming?

Having a diverse ecosystem is amazing. You go into any sort of thriving natural setting, you don't see monoculture. You see a plethora of insects, plants, and animals. One thing I noticed though, when I first got here was that there was no bee program, which is part of the whole biodynamic philosophy. I jumped on that immediately! Bees are essential to biodynamic farming- they pollinate the cover crop we grow on the off season.

What is your biggest challenge out in the field?

My biggest challenge is coming from a conventional farming

background and transitioning to a highly sustainable property. With conventional farming, your toolbox is very big. Here at Tablas, that toolbox is small, so it forces you to think outside the box. You can't just band-aid the situation, you have to ask the why's, the how's, and what-can-we-do's.

What do you find most rewarding about working here at Tablas Creek?

It's a really magical property. You have the activity with the animals, which you don't have in many places. Everything feels alive and vibrant. We are fortunate to have the soil type and we get the annual rainfall we need to make dry farming possible.

If you weren't a viticulturist, what would you be doing?

I could see myself teaching. On the other hand, I could also say I'd could just be fly fishing on a river for the rest of my life.



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