



"For just over a month, I have been focusing my attention on tasting wines from the Central Coast of California. I have made two tasting trips to the key wine regions in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties and visited a couple dozen wineries, as well as top vineyards. The experience has been fascinating and I have found some truly great wines.

I also very much enjoyed meeting so many of the winemakers and vineyard growers. They have such a passion and dedication to their craft. They remind me of their counterparts in many of the more hands-on, family run areas in Europe such as the Rhône Valley, Burgundy, Piedmont, and Alto Adige. So many are 'down to earth' with their feet firmly planted in their vineyards."

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD



"ESPRIT DE BEAUCASTEL BLANC 2009 SCORE **94** Aromas of Brazilian limes and lemon with flowers. Lemon curd. Rich. Full-bodied, with wonderful dense and agile palate of dried apples, mango and figs. Love the finish. Caramel, honey and lemons. Roussanne really comes out. 62% Roussanne, 26% Grenache Blanc and 12% Picpoul Blanc. Drink now or hold.

ESPRIT DE BEAUCASTEL PANOPLIE 2008 SCORE **94** This is a layered red with firm and silky tannins with dark berries and minerals with hints of flowers. Full yet racy and refined. Very long and beautiful. 54% Mourvèdre, 29% Grenache, and 17% Syrah. This needs another two to three years of bottle age to soften. The Mourvèdre makes it.

EN GOBELET 2009 SCORE **93** This is a blend of all dry farmed head pruned grapes; hence Gobelet in French. Full-bodied, yet balanced and refined with plenty of subtle fruit and a wet earth, spice and berry character. 56% Mourvèdre, 23% Tannat, and 21% Grenache. Drink now or hold.

ESPRIT DE BEAUCASTEL 2009 SCORE **93** A wine that shows a beautiful balance of dark fruits, spices and hints of herbs. Full body yet refined and balanced with refined tannins and a fresh finish. Made from 40% Mourvèdre, 27% Syrah, 27% Grenache and 5% Counoise. Drink or hold.

CÔTES DE TABLAS BLANC 2010 SCORE **92** Bright and fruity with a floral character of gardenias and dried mangos. Full yet balanced and crisp. Loads of flavor. 54% Viognier, 30% Grenache Blanc, 8% Marsanne, and 8% Roussanne. Screwcap. Drink now.

GRENACHE BLANC 2010 SCORE **92** Lots of Grenache blanc character with peach skin, blanched almonds, chalk and citrus. Full and fresh with a long, subtle and complex aftertaste. Drink now.

PICPOUL BLANC 2010 SCORE **91** Fascinating character of sliced peached, lemons and minerals with a chalky undertone. Full and subtle yet flavorful and intense. Lots going on here. I have only had this from a vat in Châteauneuf before blending. Like it very much here in bottle. Drink now.

ESPRIT DE BEAUCASTEL 2008 SCORE **91** A subtle and delicate wine with subtle chocolate, berry and spices on the nose and palate. Lovely length and balance. 38% Mourvèdre, 30% Grenache, 27% Syrah, and 6% Counoise. Drink now or hold.

MARSANNE 2010 SCORE **90** Oily and rich with plenty of mango and pineapple character. Full and fruity with a long flavorful finish. Screwcap. Drink now.

VERMENTINO 2010 SCORE **90** I like the almond and apple character with hints of chalk. Full body, with good fruit and a flowery. Tangy acidity. Lots of bright fruit. Screwcap. Drink now.

PATELIN DE TABLAS 2010 SCORE **90** This is the first vintage of this wine which is from bought grapes from neighbors with some from Tablas Creek too. Full to medium body, with lovely clean fruit and a long silky finish. Firm tannins. Little or no wood. Like the touch of austerity to this. 39% Syrah, 36% Grenache, 22% Mourvèdre, and 3% Counoise. Screwcap. Drink now."

