

"I tasted through this year's new and upcoming releases with long-time winemaker and vineyard manager Neil Collins and assistant winemaker Chelsea Franchi, who has been at Tablas Creek since graduating from Cal Poly in 2008. Franchi has become more deeply involved in the winemaking here in recent years, a time when, as Collins said, 'the vines are really coming into maturity and showing what the vineyards can deliver.' There's a serious dedication to bush vine-planting (en gobelet) and dry farming at the estate, a process that requires considerable extra labor and raises the risk of decreased yields, but which most winemakers, including Collins, Franchi and the Haas and Perrin families, are convinced allows for maximum site expression and wine concentration.

The Tablas Creek wines have an admirable track record for rewarding cellaring, all the way down to the entry-level bottlings, so readers are well-advised to stash a few bottles away, assuming they have patience and storage space. Please note that the flagship Esprit de Beaucastel bottling is now called Esprit de Tablas because, as Collins and Jason Haas have pointed out, 'Tablas Creek stands on its own now and shouldn't have to lean on the Beaucastel name any more.'

*Josh Reynolds – September 2015*

#### White Wines

**2013 Grenache Blanc** Pale yellow. Potent aromas of tangerine, yellow peach and honey are lifted by a subtle mineral quality. Supple, spice-accented pit and orchard fruit and honeysuckle flavors put on weight and gain sweetness with air, with no loss of vivacity. The long, seamless finish shows very good clarity and repeating minerality. **90** points. 2017 - 2021.

**2013 Roussanne** Light, bright gold. Citrus pith and orchard fruits on the nose, with a hint of chamomile emerging with air. Juicy and precise in the mouth, offering dried pear and lemon flavors that flesh out on the back half. Finishes on a fresh orange note, with very good length and a lingering suggestion of honeysuckle. **90** points. 2016 - 2020.

**2013 Viognier** Green-edged straw. Textbook Viognier scents of fresh citrus and orchard fruits and violet, with a mineral component adding urgency. Starts off taut and focused, then quickly fleshes out to offer juicy pear nectar and tangerine flavors and a touch of fennel. Closes on a repeating floral note, with very good cut and spicy persistence. **90** points. 2017 - 2020.

**2013 Esprit de Tablas Blanc** Green-tinged yellow. Ripe pear and nectarine aromas show very good depth and clarity, turning spicier with air. Smooth, warm and open-knit, offering an array of pit and citrus fruit flavors that tighten up on the back half. A floral note comes up on the fragrant, focused, fruity finish. **91** points. 2016 - 2019.

**2014 Patelin de Tablas Blanc** Vivid yellow. Mineral-accented aromas of pear, nectarine and fennel, with a floral nuance adding lift. Silky orchard and pit fruit flavors become sweeter and deeper as the wine opens in the glass. Finishes with good cut and thrust, leaving pear skin and floral notes behind. **90** points. 2016 - 2020.

**2014 Côtes de Tablas Blanc** Light yellow-gold. An exotically perfumed bouquet evokes fresh pineapple, white peach and pear, with hints of jasmine and basil emerging slowly. Dry and nervy on the palate, offering juicy orchard and pit fruit and honeysuckle flavors that put on weight and spread out with air. A dusty mineral quality adds cut to the finish, which lingers with very good floral persistence. **(90-92)** points.

**2014 Vermentino** Bright straw. Lively, mineral-accented citrus and orchard fruit aromas, with a hint of ginger in the background. Shows green apple and tangerine qualities on the palate, with white pepper and quinine notes building slowly. Nervy, sharply focused and taut on the incisive, persistent finish, with the tangerine note repeating. **90** points. Drinking window: 2017 - 2020.

**2014 Grenache Blanc** Light yellow-gold. Highly perfumed bouquet evokes lime zest, pear skin and jasmine, with a mineral element in the background. Taut and nervy in style, displaying sharply focused orchard and citrus fruit flavors and a touch of candied ginger. Finishes dry, stony and persistent, with repeating floral character. **(89-91)** points.

**2014 Marsanne** Light yellow. Vibrant citrus and orchard fruit aromas are complicated by hints of fennel, dried fig and ginger. Dry and nervy on the palate, offering bitter lemon pith and succulent herb flavors that become sweeter on the back half. This rich yet lively wine finishes with firm bite and resonating spiciness. **(90-92)** points.

**2014 Picpoul Blanc** Light yellow. Fresh orange, pear and nectarine aromas become more lively with aeration. Silky and open-knit, offering spice-laced citrus and pit fruit flavors and a hint of ginger. A floral note emerges on the focused, fruit-driven finish. **(89-91)** points.

**2014 Roussanne** Pale gold. Perfumed citrus and orchard fruits and minerals on the nose and in the mouth. Juicy and focused, displaying very good back-end lift and cut thanks to juicy acidity. Closes on a floral note, with very good persistence and a suggestion of honey. **(90-92)** points.

**2014 Esprit de Tablas Blanc** Light yellow, with a hint of green. High-pitched citrus and orchard fruits on the nose, with hints of quinine, jasmine and chalky minerals adding urgency. Silky and focused on the palate, offering intense Meyer lemon and pear flavors plus a hint of smokiness. Finishes refreshingly bitter and taut, with an echo of dusty minerals. **(91-93)** points.

#### Red Wines

**2013 Patelin de Tablas** Bright violet color. Vibrant raspberry and cherry aromas, with suggestions of spicecake and candied flowers adding complexity. On the palate, pliant red berry and bitter cherry flavors are enlivened by a hint of cracked pepper that builds on the back half. The incisive finish is framed by fine-grained tannins and leaves a subtle floral pastille quality behind. **89** points. 2018 - 2023.

**2013 Côtes de Tablas** Vivid ruby-red. Aromas of fresh red berries, potpourri and allspice, with a bright white pepper note adding urgency. Sappy and perfumed in the mouth, offering appealingly sweet raspberry and lavender pastille flavors that deepen with aeration. Closes on an emphatic floral note, with very good energy and smooth, slow-building tannins. **90** points. 2019 - 2024.

**2013 Pinot Noir Full Circle Haas Vineyard** Deep red. Powerful, deeply pitched red fruit aromas are complicated by suggestions of fresh rose, woodsmoke and incense. Seamless, palate-coating raspberry and bitter cherry flavors open slowly with aeration, picking up a suave Asian spice nuance along the way. Impressively fresh for a Pinot from this region, with silky tannins building slowly and folding smoothly into the wine's sappy fruit on the finish. **92** points. 2020 - 2025.

**2013 Grenache** Vivid ruby-red. Lively aromas of fresh red fruits and peppery spices, with mineral and floral nuances in the background. Sweet, seamless and lithe on the palate, offering juicy raspberry and floral pastille flavors sharpened by tangy acidity. Fine-grained tannins provide grip on the persistent spicy finish. **91** points. 2019 - 2024.

**2013 Mourvèdre** Opaque ruby. Pungent aromas of dark berries, lavender pastille and succulent herbs, along with building spiciness. Supple and broad on the palate, offering fresh blackberry and bitter cherry flavors and a jolt of cracked pepper. Shows very good focus and a touch of licorice on a sweet, persistent finish that's framed by youthful, building tannins. **91+** points. 2021 - 2026.

**2013 Syrah** Bright violet color. A wild, highly perfumed bouquet evokes dark berries, cola, olive paste and floral oils, with a subtle mineral nuance in the background. Smoky and seamless on the palate, offering juicy black raspberry and cassis flavors that open quickly with aeration. Finishes smooth, sweet and long, with a recurring floral note, gentle tannins and building spiciness. **91** points. 2020 - 2025.

**2013 Esprit de Tablas** Bright ruby. High-pitched red berry, cherry and floral pastille aromas are complicated by suggestions of allspice and smoky minerals. Sappy and concentrated, showing strong spicy lift to its bitter cherry and raspberry flavors. The floral note comes back strong on the strikingly long finish, which is shaped by smooth, slow-building tannins. **93** points. 2021 - 2026.

**2013 En Gobelet** Brilliant ruby-red. Spice- and smoke-accented cherry, red berry and lavender aromas pick up a suggestion of musky herbs with air. Silky, sweet and densely packed, offering bitter cherry and black raspberry flavors and a refreshing twist of white pepper that sharpens the fruit. Fine-grained tannins give grip to the energetic, spicy finish, which shows excellent focus and persistence. **92** points. 2021 - 2026.

**2013 Panoplie** Glass-staining ruby. Deeply pitched spice- and mineral-accented red and dark berry aromas are lifted by a sexy floral nuance. Silky, sweet and expansive, offering powerful blackberry liqueur and floral pastille flavors plus hints of cola and spicecake. Clings with serious tenacity on the penetrating, fruit-driven finish, which features youthful tannins and a suave touch of candied lavender. **(94-95)** points. 2021 - 2026.

**2014 Patelin de Tablas** Inky ruby. Spice- and smoke-accented aromas of cherry and dark berries are complicated by pungent white pepper. Smoky and smooth on the palate, offering juicy blackberry and bitter cherry flavors that deepen with air. A suggestion of licorice builds slowly on the gently tannic, clinging finish. **(89-91)** points.

**2014 Côtes de Tablas** Deep red. Vibrant raspberry and floral pastille scents, plus a smoky mineral element that adds vivacity. Silky and sweet on the palate, offering lively red fruit and cracked pepper flavors and a late suggestion of candied lavender. The floral note repeats on the lingering, gently tannic finish. **(90-92)** points.

**2014 Esprit de Tablas** Saturated ruby. Powerful cherry and blackberry scents are complemented by notes of licorice pastille and potpourri. Broad and fleshy on the palate, offering alluringly sweet dark berry and spicecake flavors and a repeating floral note. Tightens up and becomes spicier on the finish, which clings with excellent tenacity and smooth, harmonious tannins. **(92-94)** points.

**2014 En Gobelet** Bright purple. A wild, highly complex bouquet evokes ripe cherry and red berries, incense and candied flowers. Shows superb depth and energy to its bitter cherry and raspberry liqueur flavors, which spread out and gain sweetness with aeration. Closes on a seductive floral note, with slow-building tannins and outstanding focus and persistence. **(93-95)** points.

**2014 Panoplie** Opaque ruby. A seductively perfumed bouquet evokes raspberry preserves, boysenberry, anise and candied lavender. Densely packed yet lithe on the palate, conveying a pliant, seamless texture to its sweet red fruit and floral pastille flavors. The floral and red fruit qualities carry emphatically through the long, penetrating finish, which is shaped by silky, slow-building tannins. **(93-95)** points."

