



# International Wine Cellar

the consumer's passport to fine wine



**2007 Côtes de Tablas Blanc Paso Robles** (38% viognier, 25% marsanne, 20% grenache blanc and 17% roussanne) Light gold. Strongly floral nose offers scents of peach, lemon, mango and exotic cherry pit. Juicy, sharply focused pit fruit flavors are given nerve by bitter citrus zest qualities and are dusted with a gentle talc element. Spicy notes build and carry through a long, sappy finish. Already showing complexity. **89**

**2007 Grenache Blanc Paso Robles** Pale yellow. Bracing aromas of lemon, orange and green apple, with subtle honeysuckle and chamomile nuances adding complexity. Understated and precise, with tangy citrus flavors and a suave, dusty mineral quality. Graceful, focused and pure, finishing with impressive length and a refreshing jolt of tangy minerals. **90**

**2007 Roussanne Paso Robles** Green-gold. Precise, mineral-driven aromas of dried citrus fruits, green apple and quince, with a dusty undertone. Brisk, sharply focused lemon and orchard fruit flavors stain the palate and are intriguingly floral. An understated, elegant wine that would be great with simple fish preparations. **90**

**2007 Esprit de Beaucastel Blanc Paso Robles** (68% roussanne, 22% grenache blanc and 10% picpoul) Pale chartreuse color. Deep, smoky bouquet combines mango, pear, lees and dried flowers. Lightweight and precise, with fresh citrus and orchard fruit flavors and a late jolt of tangy minerals. Deep in flavor but elegant, finishing with good mineral lift and bite. This weighs in at a civilized 13.5% alcohol. **92**

**2007 Chardonnay Antithesis Paso Robles** Bright gold. Showy melon and pit fruit aromas are complicated by toasty lees and wet stone. Fresh and precise on the palate, offering fresh pear and honeydew flavors and picking up a pleasantly bitter peach pit quality with air. Finishes with gentle grip and a lingering anise note. **90**

**2007 Vermentino Paso Robles** Pale yellow. Salty lemon and lime aromas are strongly mineral-influenced. Clean and racy, offering tangy citrus and honeysuckle flavors, along with a gentle kiss of herbs. Pleasant and refreshing, if not the last word in complexity. **88**

**2007 Rosé Paso Robles** (60% mourvèdre, 28% grenache and 12% counoise) Light, amber-pink color. Dried red berries and orange peel on the nose, with floral and herbal notes adding interest; reminded me of a Tavel rosé. Bitter cherry and red berry flavors are firmed by dusty minerals, with a refreshingly tart quality on the back end. A serious pink wine that demands food. **89**

**2006 Côtes de Tablas Rouge Paso Robles** (72% grenache, 11% syrah, 9% mourvèdre and 8% counoise) Bright red. Impressively complex nose offers a complex array of red fruits, flowers and spices, along with cured meat and smoky minerals. Deep, sweet and focused, displaying energetic raspberry and cherry flavors and picking up tangy minerals on the back end. Sweet red fruits linger on the finish, which is refreshingly spicy and brisk. General manager Jason Haas told me that they like 2006 here "because of the vintage's great purity and freshness." **91**

**2006 Counoise Paso Robles** Deep red. Pungent, floral bouquet of cherry, smoked meat, anise and dark chocolate. Tight on entry, then quickly fleshes out to display sweet cherry and blackcurrant flavors. Tangy minerality gains strength with air and carries through a long, slightly bitter finish. I'd have liked a bit more flesh here. **88**

**2006 Grenache Paso Robles** (includes 10% syrah) Bright medium red. Sexy strawberry, raspberry and incense aromas are deepened by notes of licorice and black tea. Fresh and focused on the palate, with vivid red fruit

and candied rose flavors picking up a gentle peppery quality on the back end. A suave and alluringly silky wine: no rough edges or obvious tannins that I can find. **91**

**2006 Syrah Paso Robles** (includes 10% grenache) Opaque ruby. Powerful, youthfully brooding aromas of cherry, blackcurrant, dark chocolate and black pepper. Sweet dark berry flavors stain the palate and are complicated by violet and smoked meat. Shuts down on the finish, which leaves a strong note of licorice behind. **90(+?)**

**2006 Mourvèdre Paso Robles** (includes 10% syrah) Deep ruby-red. Vivid raspberry and cherry preserve aromas are complemented by musky underbrush and herbs. Broad, sweet red and dark fruit flavors are enlivened by zesty minerals and given depth by mocha and black cardamom. A very inviting, low-tannin rendition of this often rustic variety, finishing with a strong echo of red berries. **91**

**2006 Esprit de Beaucastel Paso Robles** (45% mourvèdre, 28% grenache, 22% syrah and 5% counoise) Deep red with a bright rim. Spicy red berries, potpourri and minerals on the nose; this smells awfully fresh. Bright, palate-staining raspberry and blackcurrant flavors possess excellent concentration and are leavened by zesty minerality. Finishes smooth and silky, with echoing raspberry and floral qualities. This is complex enough to enjoy right now. **93**

**2006 Esprit de Beaucastel Panoplie Paso Robles** (68% mourvèdre, 27% grenache and 5% syrah) Bright ruby color. Deeper dark fruits on the nose than the "basic" Esprit. Also more brooding and slow-to-unfold, eventually giving up black cherry, tobacco, licorice and candied plum. A big, rich mouthful of wine, displaying a full range of black and blue fruits and a velvety texture. The finish is utterly seamless, and endless. Today I prefer the elegance of the previous wine but this is built for the long haul. **94**

**2006 Tannat Paso Robles** Opaque ruby. Powerful cherry and blackberry aromas are complemented by subtle tobacco and floral qualities. Plush and sweet, offering deep cherry and dark berry flavors without the notorious tannins that usually mark tannat. Finishes with good breadth and cling, leaving dark cherry behind. **90**

**2006 Vin de Paille Paso Robles** (half bottle) (40% grenache blanc, 23% viognier, 20% roussanne and 17% marsanne) Deep, bright gold. Peach and apricot nectar aromas are complicated by floral honey and smoky herbs. Fresher tangerine and apple flavors turn sweet quickly, regaining the lush pit fruit qualities. Finishes with a gentle spicy kick that energizes the sweet fruit and lingers impressively. **92**

**2006 Vin de Paille Quintessence Paso Robles** (half bottle) (100% roussanne) Green-gold. Pungent, incisive scents of pear, white peach, smoky minerals and mint. Remarkably fresh and precise for a sweet wine (there's 28% residual sugar here), offering luscious orchard fruit, mango and bitter fruit skin and pit flavors. Refreshing spice and mineral notes add urgency to the long, juicy finish. Offers a superb balance of sweetness and vivacity. **94**

**2006 Vin de Paille Sacrerouge Paso Robles** (half bottle) (100% mourvèdre) Dark red. Complex bouquet of deep cherry, cassis, pipe tobacco, olive and smoky herbs. Pliant and sweet, with fleshy dark fruit flavors and exotic candied floral qualities. For a sweet wine this is impressively energetic, and it finishes with excellent lift and cling. This will be great with washed rind cheeses. **91"**

