

# TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD



*The Grapevine*  
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Summer 2002

## State of the Vineyard

The vines are looking vibrantly healthy as we wait out the growing season. Verasion began the week of July 15, and the vines have been netted to protect the crop from hungry birds. The fruit set was very good: we've already dropped some crop, and we'll certainly make another pass. Even so, we're looking at our greatest production to date, with an estimate of 12,000 total cases not unrealistic. We are expecting about 5000 or 6000 cases of white, and 6500 to 8000 cases of red.

This additional production comes from the vines we planted in 2000, including eight to ten new acres of Roussanne, four acres of Grenache, two acres of Counoise, two acres of Syrah, and other scattered smaller plantings.

The growing season has been consistently favorable. After a somewhat cool but sunny spring, we have had several gradual warming trends where the daytime highs move from the mid-seventies to the lower 100s over the course of a week, at which point the weather breaks and we begin the cycle anew. These warm days have been balanced by cool nights, often 40 or 45 degrees cooler than the days. We've hardly seen a cloud all summer -- perfect ripening conditions, similar to the 2000 vintage.

Our efforts to farm organically have met with terrific results so far this year. After the first leafhoppers of the year were sighted in early July, we released 100,000

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## Tablas Creek in the News

In the past several months, Tablas Creek (and Paso Robles in general) has received more press than we have in several years. Beginning with a nice retrospective on Bob Haas's career in the *San Luis Obispo Tribune*, we've seen press locally (*Vintages Magazine* and *Plus Magazine*), regionally (*Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *San Jose Mercury News*, and the Wine Literary Awards) and nationally (*Wine Enthusiast*, *Wine Advocate*, *Santø*). Both our 2000 Antithesis Chardonnay and our 2000 Clos Blanc were recognized in the *Wine Enthusiast*: the Antithesis received a score of 91, and the Clos Blanc, with a score of 92, will be singled out for distinction in the August/September issue.

See [tablascreek.com/InTheNews.html](http://tablascreek.com/InTheNews.html) for links to a complete list of articles and reviews featuring Tablas Creek. We update the list weekly; if you see us mentioned, please let us know!

In addition to the print stories, we were honored to be a featured winery at Copia, the American Center for Wine, Food and the Arts in Napa. On Saturday, July 6, we poured the wines for visitors to the facility, and throughout the following week the Copia staff poured Tablas Creek and told our story to interested visitors. As a result of this event, we've seen an increase both in visits to the winery and in requests for the wines in Northern California. If you find yourself up in Napa, Copia is well worth a visit. More information is available at [www.copia.org](http://www.copia.org). ©

# Focus Varietal: Grenache Noir

Grenache Noir is the most widely planted “cépage noble” in the southern Rhône Valley and Provence. It is a vigorous variety with upright shoots that lends itself to “gobelet” or “head pruning”; it is widely cultivated in this manner in France and in Spain. At Tablas Creek, our steep hillsides preclude cross cultivation, so we cultivate it in double cordon fashion with six fruiting canes, each with two buds.

## Early History

Grenache appears to have originated in Spain, most likely in Aragon, and ampelographers believe that Grenache was the foundation of Aragon’s excellent *vin rouge du pays*. From Aragon, it spread throughout Spain in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is likely that the famous Spanish “Tinto de Rota” wine was produced from Grenache grapes, and many authors have noted the similarity of this renowned wine to those produced from Grenache in Banyuls, Collioure and Port-Vendres.

In France, Grenache imported from Aragon first arrived in the vineyards of Roussillon, and then expanded into Languedoc, Vaucluse and Provence. In the 1860s, Grenache enjoyed particular popularity in Vaucluse and Provence.

Grenache was brought to California in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where its erect carriage, vigor and resistance to drought made it a popular planting choice. It came to occupy second place in

vineyard planting after Caringnan and was an element in wine producers’ branded field blends. Unfortunately, this usage encouraged growers to select cuttings from the most productive vines,



increasing grape production but reducing the overall quality of the vines.

## Grenache at Tablas Creek

By the time we began Tablas Creek Vineyard in 1990, the quality of California Grenache vines had greatly degenerated. As a result, we imported our cuttings from France, where Jacques Perrin at Château de Beaucastel had worked tirelessly to regenerate high quality Grenache vines.

Grenache’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 the bunch count to 10 or 12 clusters per vine. This practice means that we harvest approximately 3 tons of fruit per acre of vines.

## Flavors and Aromas

Grenache produces wines with high concentrations of fruit, tannin, and acids. Its flavors are most typically currant, cherry, and raisin, and its aromas are of black pepper, menthol, and licorice.

Although many California clones produce simple, fruity wines which tend to be pale in color, our French clones produce brilliant ruby red wines which are heady in alcohol (usually 15% or higher), and intensely fruity and fat.

For our *Reserve Cuvée* and *Esprit de Beaucastel*, we combine it with Syrah and Mourvèdre to open up those more closed varieties. It can also make a delightfully fruity and forward wine as in our 85% Grenache 2000 *Petite Cuvée* (which received a 92 from Robert Parker). ©

More information about Grenache Noir and other Rhone varietals can be found at the Rhone Rangers website: [www.rhonerangers.com](http://www.rhonerangers.com)



9339 Adelaida Road  
 Paso Robles, CA 93446  
 Ph: 805.237.1231 Fax: 805.237.1314  
 Email: Orders@tablascreek.com

# Wine Order Form

## Billing Address

## Shipping Address (if different)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 TCV Wine Club Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

© Due to Federal & State laws that restrict the interstate sale and transportation of wines, we are permitted to ship to addresses in the following states only: CA, CO, IA, ID, IL, MN, MO, NM, OR, WA, WI, WV. © Sorry, we cannot accept international orders. © For best service, we recommend having your wine shipped to a business address.

	Bottles	Wine	Bottle Price	Total
	_____	<b>CLOS BLANC 2000 (750 ML)</b>	\$35.00	_____
<b>Discounts:</b>				
© Non-Wine Club Members receive a 10% discount on orders of 12 bottles or more.	_____	<b>CLOS BLANC 2000 (375 ML)</b>	\$18.00	_____
	_____	<b>ANTITHESIS 2000 (750 ML)</b>	\$35.00	_____
	_____	<b>ROSÉ 2001 (750 ML)</b>	\$27.00	_____
© Wine Club Members receive a discount of 20% on orders of any size.	_____	<b>RESERVE CUVÉE 1999 (750 ML)</b>	\$35.00	_____
	_____	<b>RESERVE CUVÉE 1999 (375 ML)</b>	\$18.00	_____
All cases (both 750 ml & 375 ml) contain 12 bottles.	_____	<b>ROUGE 1998 (750 ML)</b>	\$32.50	_____
	_____	<b>PETITE CUVÉE 1999 (750 ML)</b>	\$25.00	_____

**Shipping:**  
 In order to minimize the wines' exposure to temperature extremes, all wines will be packed in styro packs and shipped via FedEx Second Day Air. Express delivery is available -- please inquire.

State	Up to 6 bottles	7-12 bottles	
CA	\$14.00	\$20.00	
CO, ID, NM, OR, WA	\$20.00	\$30.00	
IL, IA, MN, MO, WI, WV	\$25.00	\$40.00	

**Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

**Discount** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sales Tax 7.25% (CA orders only)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Shipping** \_\_\_\_\_

**ORDER TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**Method of Payment:**  
 Check    Visa/Mastercard:   Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_   Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

By placing this order you certify that you are at least 21 years of ages and the product ordered is for your personal use only and not for resale or trade. Identification showing proof of age is required for delivery. All sales shall be completed in California and title passes to the buyer in California. By placing your order you authorize us to act on your behalf to engage a common carrier to deliver your order to you. All shipping charges and risk or loss or damage during shipping are the buyer's responsibility. We reserve the right to restrict quantity and correct pricing errors.

Return form to Tablas Creek Vineyard, 9339 Adelaida Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446 or fax to 805.237.1314



### Tablas Creek at Hearst Castle

Tablas Creek Vineyard's 2000 *Esprit de Beaucastel* was featured at the Hearst Castle Charity Dinner during the 2002 KCBX Central Coast Wine Classic. Robert Haas, Meghan Dunn, and Jason Haas represented the vineyard at the event.

## What's in a Name?

When we began this project, we assumed that everyone would learn (and remember!) that Tablas Creek is closely associated with Château de Beaucastel. However, while we've found that the trade does know and remember, the news hasn't spread to the public as quickly as we'd like. To emphasize our connection and to recognize the level of quality we have reached, we are changing the names of our signature wines. Our top red wine, previously known as *Reserve Cuvée*, will be called *Esprit de Beaucastel* beginning with the 2000 vintage. Our top white (formerly *Clos Blanc*) will be called *Esprit de Beaucastel Blanc* beginning with the 2001 vintage. Look for these new vintages beginning in the fall of 2002. ☺

### Wine Pairing: Chicken with Forty Cloves of Garlic

A traditional Provençal dish. The garlic and fennel require a wine that is both rich and aromatic, and the 2000 *Clos Blanc* makes a perfect complement.

Serves 4-6.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 whole chicken, in pieces (about 4 lbs)
- 6 tbsp. olive oil
- 40 cloves of garlic, unpeeled
- 1 head fennel, cut into slices
- 1 sprig fresh tarragon
- 2 sprigs thyme
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- ground black pepper

- ☺ Mix olive oil, garlic cloves, fennel slices, and herbs in large mixing bowl.
- ☺ Add chicken pieces, and toss so that chicken is completely coated with oil. Salt and pepper to taste.
- ☺ Transfer entire mixture into a heavy casserole dish with tight-fitting lid, making sure chicken pieces are tightly packed.
- ☺ Cover, and cook for 1 hour at 375°.
- ☺ Serve with hot French bread.

## Wine Club Update

Tablas Creek is excited to launch our wine club. Many of you have already received brochures with details; membership highlights include:

- ☺ 6-bottle shipments of wine twice annually via FedEx, direct from the vineyard.
- ☺ A selection of wines, including pre-release specials, members-only cuvées, and special winery blends.
- ☺ A 20% discount on any additional wine (and Tablas merchandise) orders.

Each year, we'll be bottling special lots exclusively for wine club members. It's a great opportunity to sample some unique Tablas Creek Vineyard wines! You can sign up online at [tablascreek.com](http://tablascreek.com), or call us at 805.237.1231. ☺

### State of the Vineyard,

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lacewings (a natural predator for leafhoppers) each of the next two weeks. The leafhoppers are now under control, and the vines look great.

We have been fertilizing exclusively with drips from tea made from our compost pile. We have also experimented with spraying the compost tea instead of sulfur on the leaves and bunches to combat mildew, and those vines have been completely mildew-free. If we continue to see good results for the remainder of the year, we'll expand our compost tea operations next year. ☺

## Upcoming Events

🕒 **September 25-29**

Santa Fe Wine and Chile Fiesta  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
[www.santafewineandchile.org](http://www.santafewineandchile.org)  
505.438.8060

🕒 **October 17-20**

California Wine Experience  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
[www.winespectator.com/Wine/CWE2002/home.html](http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/CWE2002/home.html)  
212.684.4224

🕒 **October 18-20**

Harvest Festival  
Paso Robles, California  
[www.pasowine.com](http://www.pasowine.com)  
805.239.8463 x471

🕒 **November 12**

Dinner at James Beard House  
New York, New York  
[www.jamesbeard.org](http://www.jamesbeard.org)  
212.627.2308

### Tablas Creek now open for tours and tasting

Tablas Creek is always happy to see you! Tours are offered daily at 10:30 and 2:00. Come visit the vineyard and nursery complex before tasting current releases. Special tours and tastings are always available -- call for more information.



9339 Adelaida Road  
Paso Robles, CA 93446

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