

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD

CÔTES DE TABLAS 2002



The Tablas Creek Vineyard Côtes de Tablas is a blend of four estate-grown Rhône varietals: Grenache Syrah, Mourvedre and Counoise. Like most wines of the Southern Rhône, it is a blend of varietals, featuring the fruitiness of Grenache balanced by the meatiness of Mourvèdre and the spice and structure of Syrah. The 2002 Côtes de Tablas is Tablas Creek's third release of its Côtes de Tablas red blend, made in the style of a full-throttle Côtes du Rhone.

The 2002 vintage was tremendous: warm and sunny, with cool nights that prolonged the hangtime of the grapes. The warmth and long hangtime led to grapes that were concentrated, rich, and ripe, but with good balance as well as ripeness. Our first lots of Syrah came in on September 10th, followed by Counoise on September 17th, and Grenache and Mourvedre both on September 24th. The beautiful fall weather allowed us to bring in fruit when it was at peak ripeness, and allow other blocks to continue to mature. The harvest continued through October, with the last lot of Mourvedre safely in the cellar on October 28th.

All varietals were fermented in stainless steel with the use of native yeasts: the Syrah in open-top fermenters, punched down manually, and the other varietals in closed fermenters with pump-over aeration. After pressing, the wines were racked, blended, aged for a year in 1200-gallon French oak foudres, and then bottled in June 2003. The wines underwent only a light filtration before bottling.

The 2002 Côtes de Tablas is a rich, spicy wine, with copious aromas of cherries and raspberries, laced by smoke and spice. The flavors are round, juicy and rich with ripe tannins, a hint of oak, and long, elegant nutmeg finish.

TECHNICAL NOTES

45% Grenache
22% Syrah
21% Mourvèdre
12% Counoise

14.2% Alcohol by Volume

3500 Cases Produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Grilled steaks
Pastas with meat sauces
Rich beef stews
Spicy sausages

