

# TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD

## ESPRIT DE TABLAS 2011



### TECHNICAL NOTES

40% Mourvedre  
30% Grenache  
20% Syrah  
10% Counoise

14.5% Alcohol by Volume  
4400 Cases Produced

### FOOD PAIRINGS

Game  
Dark Fowl (i.e., duck)  
Richly flavored stews  
Lamb  
Asian preparation of red meats  
(i.e., beef stir fry)

The Tablas Creek Vineyard 2011 Esprit de Tablas is a blend of four estate-grown varietals, propagated from budwood cuttings from the Château de Beaucastel estate. The wine is based on the dark red fruit, earth, spice and mid-palate richness of Mourvèdre, with additions of Grenache for forward fruit, approachability and lushness, Syrah for mineral, aromatics, and back-palate tannins, and Counoise for brambly spice and acidity.

The 2011 vintage was our second consecutive winter with healthy rainfall, but yields were dramatically reduced by two nights of frost on April 8th and 9th, impacting early-sprouting grapes like Grenache and Syrah but largely sparing the late-sprouting Mourvèdre. Despite the low crop loads, ripening was slow due to a very cool summer, and harvest roughly three weeks later than normal, beginning in mid-October and not concluding until early-November. Warm, sunny weather during harvest allowed Mourvèdre to reach full maturity. The long hangtime and low yields combined to produce fruit with notable richness balanced by higher than usual acidity, all at low alcohol levels.

The grapes for our Esprit de Tablas were grown on our 120-acre certified organic estate vineyard.

The grapes were fermented using native yeasts in open and closed stainless steel fermenters. After pressing, the wines were moved into barrel, blended, and aged in 1200-gallon French oak foudres before being bottled in May 2013.

The nose shows exuberant freshness, with Mourvèdre's signature currant, black tea and roasted meat aromas, given lift by a tangy, winey note showing rosemary and mineral. The mouth is long, fine and balanced, lusher than the nose suggests, with flavors of licorice, spice, meat drippings and clove, mid-weight now (relatively soon after bottling) but with every expectation of deepening over coming months. We recommend that you hold the 2011 Esprit for a few months, then drink either between 2014 and 2016 or 2020-2040.

