



ESPRIT DE TABLAS BLANC

2015



The Tablas Creek Vineyard 2015 Esprit de Tablas Blanc is a blend of three estate-grown varietals, propagated from budwood cuttings from the Château de Beaucastel estate. Roussanne provides the core richness, minerality, and flavors of honey and spice, while Grenache Blanc adds green apple and anise flavors, a lush mouthfeel and bright acids. Picpoul Blanc completes the blend, adding a saline minerality and tropical notes.

The 2015 vintage saw dramatically reduced yields from the combined effects of four years of drought and cool, unsettled weather during May's flowering. Months alternated between significantly cooler than normal and significantly warmer than normal, which produced an early start to harvest but required multiple passes through most vineyard blocks during a long, drawn-out picking season. Yields were down as much as 50% in early-ripening grapes like Viognier and Syrah, but later grapes like Mourvedre and Roussanne were only down slightly. The result was a vintage with excellent concentration but unusually good acids, and wines with dramatic perfume, texture, and intensity.

The grapes for our Esprit de Tablas Blanc were grown on our certified organic estate vineyard.

The fruit was whole cluster pressed, and fermented with native yeasts. The Roussanne was fermented in neutral oak of various sizes: 60-gallon oak barrels, 170-gallon demi-muids, and 1200-gallon foudres. The Grenache Blanc was fermented partially in stainless steel and also in one foudre, and the Picpoul Blanc was fermented in small neutral oak and stainless steel barrels. All the wines went through malolactic fermentation. The lots were selected and blended in April 2015, and aged in foudre until their bottling in December 2015.

The 2015 Esprit de Tablas Blanc is powerfully fruity and floral on the nose, with an exoticism reminiscent to me of Gewurztraminer: ripe melon, honeysuckle, vanilla bean, mace, and a little savory cedar spice. The mouth is rich and powerfully Roussanne despite its relatively low percentage, with flavors of baked pear, creme caramel, and baking spices. The acids build on the finish to a mango-like intensity. A fascinating, structured Esprit Blanc that should be a pleasure to watch evolve in bottle. Already delicious, it should also go out 15 years or more and gain additional nuttiness and complexity with time.

TECHNICAL NOTES

55% Roussanne
28% Grenache Blanc
17% Picpoul Blanc

13.0% Alcohol by Volume
2000 Cases Produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Cooked shellfish (lobster, softshell crab, shrimp)
Roasted or grilled vegetables (eggplant, asparagus, peppers)
Foods cooked with garlic and olive oil
Rich fish dishes (i.e. salmon, swordfish)
Asian stir fry