

ESPRIT BLANC

2016



TECHNICAL NOTES

75% Roussanne
18% Grenache Blanc
7% Picpoul Blanc

13.0% Alcohol by Volume
2070 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

The Tablas Creek Vineyard 2016 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.

Tasting Notes:

The 2016 Esprit de Tablas Blanc shows a powerfully Roussanne nose, with notes of beeswax, lychee, white pepper, Asian pear, white flowers, and a little cedary spice. The mouth is rich and powerful, with flavor descriptors that make it sound sweet although it is absolutely dry: lemon pound cake, pear skin, honeysuckle, and sweet oak. The wine's rich texture is in full evidence on the long finish, while the citrus character from Grenache Blanc and a little saline minerality from Picpoul keep things feeling fresh. We expect this to go out two decades, gaining additional nuttiness and complexity over the years.

Production Notes:

The 2016 vintage, while still marked by drought, saw better rainfall than the four previous years, and the vineyards showed good health through most of the growing season. That season started with a very early budbreak and continued warm weather spurred our earliest-ever beginning to harvest, on August 18th. But beginning mid-August, three cool weeks slowed the ripening for all but our earliest grapes, and allowed them to reach flavor and phenolic maturity with slightly above-average hang time. The resulting vintage shows excellent concentration but also remarkable vibrancy, with electric acids framing appealing juiciness.

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 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 Esprit Blanc was selected from the vintage's best lots, blended, and returned to foudre in April 2017, and aged an additional 8 months in foudre until its bottling in December 2017.