



DIANTHUS 2018



The Tablas Creek Vineyard Dianthus 2018 is a blend of three estate-grown varietals, propagated from budwood cuttings from the Château de Beaucastel estate. The blend incorporates the rosé traditions of the southern Rhône, taking its Mourvèdre foundation from the solid, dry rosés of Bandol and incorporating the structure of skin contact from the rich, juicy Grenache-based Tavel. Dianthus -- in pre-2012 vintages called simply Rosé -- refers to a genus of flowering plants known for their deep pink blossoms and known colloquially to gardeners as "pinks".

We take the grapes for our Dianthus from the oldest section of French-source vines at Tablas Creek. In 1994, two years after our French vines had been released from their USDA-mandated quarantine, we had propagated just enough to plant a few rows of each varietal on a hill overlooking our vine nursery. Over the next few years, we used cuttings from these plants to plant the rest of our vineyard. These few rows of high-quality vines ripen later than the rest of the vineyard, so we harvest the Mourvèdre, Grenache, and Counoise together and co-ferment them (on their skins) in a single stainless steel fermenter. After 48 hours, we draw about 800 gallons of juice off the blend, and ferment it dry away from the skins. These lots are then supplemented with saignées (bleedings) from other Mourvèdre and Grenache lots in the cellar.

The grapes for Dianthus were grown on our certified organic estate vineyard.

The 2018 vintage saw an almost ideal balance of vine health and stress, as is often the case with the first dry year after a very wet one. Although rainfall was just 70% of normal, the rains came late, delaying the onset of bud-break and the beginning of the growing season. The cool weather continued most of the year, punctuated by a six-week heat wave in July and early August. But temperatures moderated before picking began, and harvest proceeded under slightly cooler than normal conditions, allowing us to pick without stress and producing fruit (and wines) with intense flavors and good balancing acidity.

An electric pink. The nose shows powerful watermelon and cherry fruit, mint, and baking spices. The mouth is vivid, with strawberry juiciness followed by vibrant acids and a tangy plum skin impression bringing both refreshing acidity and a touch of tannin to the long finish. A rosé to convert people who think that pink wines can't be serious. Drink before the end of 2020.

TECHNICAL NOTES

51% Mourvèdre
39% Grenache
10% Counoise

14.1% Alcohol by Volume
1500 Cases produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Salmon
Sushi
Anchovies
Sausages
Fried Chicken
Mediterranean tapas