

2018 Wine Creek Ranch Grenache

DRY CREEK VALLEY | SONOMA COUNTY

Wine Creek Ranch's terroir in the Dry Creek Valley shares many similarities with France's Southern Rhône Valley, especially in terms of climate – warm to hot days and very cool nights. For this reason, more than two decades ago, we began planting an assortment of Southern Rhone grapes with an emphasis on Grenache.

THE VINTAGE

One of the latest starts to harvest in the past 15 years resulted in a vintage that was compressed in half by September's heat which quickly brought early ripening varieties to full maturity. The late start and extra summer sunshine boded well for our traditional Mediterranean varieties planted and organically-farmed on our Wine Creek Ranch estate.

WINEMAKING NOTES

Achieving optimal ripeness at lower sugars allowed us to harvest earlier this year. We balance this variety's tendency towards firm tannins by following a Burgundian winemaking approach focused on extremely gentle handling and slow, controlled extraction. For example, partial whole-cluster fermentation (15%-20%) balances tannins and adds high-toned red fruit, while gentle basket-pressing further optimizes overall tannin quality. Mirroring Southern Rhône winemaking tradition, we use traditional French oak foudres to best capture and preserve Grenache's prized strawberry aromatics. Skin contact time varied depending on the lot with slightly cooler fermentations this year.

THE WINE

Strawberry is the buzzword for varietally-true Grenache. Ours hits the spot! High-toned aromatics of crushed candied violets and wild strawberry. As you sip, ripe coastal strawberry, pomegranate, rhubarb, blackberry, red licorice, cranberry tart, and subtle hints of black pepper all come to mind. Youthful, firm tannins flow into a long finish. A theoretical combination of the robust 2015 and elegant 2016 vintages, this wine will continue to evolve up through 2028-2030 with good storage. Family and friends who crave Pinot Noir will be pleasantly surprised by our Grenache. Food loves this wine. Try it with mac & cheese smothered in sharp cheddar (add bacon bits for an over-the-top experience), a terrine of foie gras, spicy lamb stew, tuna tartare, or any rich seafood.

TECHNICAL NOTES

HARVESTED BOTTLED.....	October 4 – 16, 2018 January 23, 2020
APPELLATION.....	Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County
VINEYARDS.....	100% Wine Creek Ranch, Quivira's home vineyard, CCOF-certified organic
COMPOSITION.....	82% Grenache, 18% Mourvèdre
FERMENTATION.....	Predominantly open-top fermenters with 15%-20% whole clusters and punching down by hand 1-2 times daily
BARREL AGING.....	15 months total; first 8 months in French oak barrels (20% new), remaining 7 months in 500L barrels and 600 and 900 gallon French oak foudres
PRODUCTION.....	377 cases
STATS.....	14.3 % ABV pH 3.47 TA 0.61
RETAIL PRICE.....	\$36
WINEMAKER.....	Hugh Chappelle

