

Vineyards

The grapes for this wine were grown on a southwest-facing hillside overlooking a peaceful glen deep in the heart of Pleasant Valley in the Santa Cruz Mountains. On the floor of this glen, a cloistered convent rests amidst the redwoods, apple trees and vines. As a result of their idyllic, hillside locale, these grapes benefit from excellent drainage and ample afternoon sunshine. Given their proximity to the Pacific Ocean (less than 4 miles to the west), dollops of fog spill into the valley in the late afternoons and provide the coolness so important to the retention of natural grape acidity. In addition to promoting a rich, mouthfilling structure in this wine, the coolness allows the grapes to ripen slowly and evenly resulting in heavenly flavors.

In the Winery

The grapes were harvested by hand in late October 2005. Yields were below average, 2.0-3.0 tons per acre. Arriving at the winery, we destemmed the grapes and fermented them in small lots in open top fermentors. Over the next two weeks, the grapes were macerated using the traditional punch down method. The whole-berry fermentation combined with the cooler temperatures maintained in small lot fermentation allow us to produce a rich wine, with all of its abundant fruit intact.

Following the wine's initial fermentation, we barreled the wine in French oak. The varietal composition of the final blend is as follows: Merlot - 55%; Malbec - 30%; Petit Verdot - 15%. The wine was bottled in late May of 2007.

Tasting Notes:

COLOR: Deep ruby red with a purple edge
NOSE: Cassis, black tartarian cherry, and sweet oak, combine with a hint of granite after a summer rain.
MOUTH: Round, supple and very full-bodied on the palate with layers of cassis, ripe plum, cigar box and notes of vanilla. This wine has backbone to spare and will age beautifully for many years to come.

