

DIANTHUS 2015



TECHNICAL NOTES

49% Mourvèdre
37% Grenache
14% Counoise

14.3% Alcohol by Volume
5000 Cases Produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Salmon
Sushi
Anchovies
Sausages
Fried chicken
Mediterranean tapas

The Tablas Creek Vineyard Dianthus 2015 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 former 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 120-acre 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 120-acre certified organic estate vineyard.

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. Grenache harvest began on the 10th of September, Counoise on the 26th and Mourvedre on the 23rd.

The 2015 Dianthus has an electric orange/pink. On the nose, aromas of cherry skin with orange peel, watermelon essence and a deep-toned spiciness. The mouth is richly fruity, with strawberry, yellow raspberry, apricot and plum. The wine’s vibrant acids and even a hint of skin tannin come out and keep the extravagantly floral, lightly minty finish dry and fresh.