

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD

ESPRIT DE BEAUCASTEL 2004



The Tablas Creek Vineyard *Esprit de Beaucastel* 2004 is a blend of four estate-grown varietals, propagated from bud-wood cuttings from the Château de Beaucastel estate.

The 2004 vintage was excellent, with a very early spring balanced by a long, warm (but rarely hot) summer. The extended ripening cycle gave the grapes intense aromatics, pronounced minerality, good acids, and good structure. Our first lots of Syrah came in on September 3rd, followed by Grenache on September 17th, and Counoise September 30th. An early onset of the fall rains on October 14th stopped harvest for a short time, but two weeks of sunny, cool, and breezy temperatures allowed us to harvest most of the rest of the Mourvèdre between October 23rd and 25th. A final lot of Mourvèdre, harvested on November 18th (our latest harvest ever) completed the 2004 vintage.

The grapes were fermented using native yeasts in open and closed stainless steel fermenters. After pressing, the wines were moved into barrel, blended, and aged in 1200-gallon French oak foudres before being bottled in July 2005. The wine is unfinned and unfiltered.

The 2004 *Esprit de Beaucastel* is dark black-red in color, with a rich briary nose of dark red fruit (plum and currant), sweet spices (nutmeg, clove) and mocha. The elegant, layered palate shows spicy plum and cherry fruit, smoky, meaty flavors, and ripe tannins. The long finish reveals mineral and black cherry. The wine is showing remarkably well now, but should evolve elegantly in bottle for 10-15 years or longer.

TECHNICAL NOTES

50% Mourvèdre
27% Syrah
17% Grenache
6% Counoise

14.5% alcohol by volume

3250 cases produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Game
Dark Fowl (i.e., duck)
Richly flavored stews
Lamb
Asian preparation of red meats (i.e., beef stir fry)

