

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD

ESPRIT DE BEAUCASTEL 2005



TECHNICAL NOTES

44% Mourvèdre
26% Grenache
25% Syrah
5% 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)

The Tablas Creek Vineyard *Esprit de Beaucastel* 2005 is a blend of four estate-grown varietals, propagated from budwood cuttings from the Château de Beaucastel estate.

The 2005 vintage was one of nature's lucky breaks, with excellent quality and higher-than-normal yields. The wet winter of '04-'05 gave the grapevines ample groundwater, and a warm period in March got the vines off to an early May flowering. The grapes spent nearly a month longer than normal on the vine, and the resulting wines were intensely mineral, with good structure and powerful aromatics. Our first lots of Syrah came in on September 29th, followed by Grenache on October 5th, Mourvedre on October 11th, and Counoise on October 28th.

As with all our wines, the grapes for our *Esprit de Beaucastel* were grown on our 120-acre certified organic estate vineyard.

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 May 2007. The blend of the 2005 vintage contains an unusually large amount of Grenache, which was so compelling that we made room for it by reducing each other component slightly. The wine is unfinned and unfiltered.

The 2005 *Esprit de Beaucastel* is dark black-red in color, with a rich briary nose of black cherry, plum and rare steak, overlaid with sweet spices and mocha. The elegant, layered palate shows explosive fruit, with smoky and meaty flavors. Ripe tannins provide structure. The long finish reveals mineral and black cherry notes. The wine is showing remarkably well now, but should evolve elegantly in bottle for 10-15 years or longer.

