

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD

CÔTES DE TABLAS 2009



The Tablas Creek Vineyard *Côtes de Tablas* is a blend of four estate-grown Rhône varietals: Grenache, Syrah, Counoise and Mourvèdre. Like most wines of the Southern Rhône, it is a blend of varietals, featuring the fruit and spice of Grenache balanced by the spice and mineral of Syrah, the appealing briary wildness of Counoise, and the structure of Mourvèdre.

The grapes for our *Côtes de Tablas* were grown on our 120-acre certified organic estate vineyard. The 2009 vintage was our third consecutive drought year, with yields further reduced by April frosts. Berries and clusters were small, with excellent concentration. Ripening over the summer was gradual and our harvest largely complete except for about half our Mourvedre at the time of a major rainstorm on October 13th. Crop sizes were 15% smaller than 2008 and 30% lower than usual. The low yields and gradual ripening resulted in wines with an appealing lushness, rich texture and wonderful chalky tannins.

All varietals were fermented in a mix of stainless steel and wooden upright fermenters with the use of native yeasts. After pressing, the wines were racked, blended, aged for a year in 1200-gallon French oak foudres, and then bottled in December/February 2011. The wines underwent only a light filtration before bottling.

The 2009 *Côtes de Tablas* shows a rich, minty nose with dark chocolate, cherry, leather, licorice and crushed rock. The mouth explodes with dark cherry, with nice chalky Grenache tannins giving firmness. The very long finish lingers with flavors of licorice, spice and cherry liqueur. Our most concentrated Cotes de Tablas ever; it should drink well young but also cellar happily for a decade.

TECHNICAL NOTES

43% Grenache
24% Syrah
18% Counoise
15% Mourvedre

14.5% Alcohol by Volume

1050 Cases Produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Grilled steaks
Pastas with meat sauces
Rich beef stews
Spicy sausages

