

DIANTHUS 2014



TECHNICAL NOTES

46% Mourvèdre
41% Grenache
13% Counoise

14.3% Alcohol by Volume
1600 Cases Produced

FOOD PAIRINGS

Salmon
Sushi
Anchovies
Sausages
Fried chicken
Mediterranean tapas

The Tablas Creek Vineyard Dianthus 2014 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 2014 vintage was the result of three years of drought and our earliest-ever beginning to the growing season. The summer was warm but without serious heat spikes, and our coolest August in a decade slowed ripening at a critical period. When it warmed back up in September, the fruit tumbled in, and we finished in mid-October, about two weeks earlier than normal. The result was a vintage with excellent concentration balanced by good freshness, which should be vibrant and powerful young, and should age beautifully.

The 2014 Dianthus is a rich pink, like fresh-pressed strawberry juice. The nose shows watermelon, plum rose petal and more strawberries. The mouth is rich, with great acids and a powerful floral jasmine element. The finish is long and clean. Pair it with Mediterranean cuisine, Spanish tapas, preparations with garlic and olive oil... or just enjoy it outside on a sunny day.