

2014 Tempranillo

Alexander Valley, Sonoma County



Varietal Composition	97% Tempranillo, 3% Graciano
Appellation	Alexander Valley, Sonoma County
Harvest	September 2014
Technical Data	ALC: 14.7% by vol.; TA: 6.0 G/L; pH: 3.62
Cooperage	22 Months in 100% French Oak Barrels (40% New)
Production	1,105 Cases

The 2014 Vintage

In the beginning of our growing season, the drought was a main concern. The 2013/2014 winter was one of the driest on record in California and rainfall totals in the Napa Valley were approximately half of normal. However, the timing of the late rains through February and April let our vineyard team relax a little as the vines received a much needed drink of water as they were emerging from dormancy and about to begin bud break. This rainfall recharged our soil and provided enough water to fill the reservoirs. Furthermore, the spring was warm allowing us to save water if needed for irrigation rather than using it for frost protection. As summer began, our vineyards already had full canopies and full clusters. Veraison, when the skins of the grapes change color, typically occurs in late July; but this year we saw the changing color occur much sooner. And finally, while the vines used for high-quality wine production generally don't need much water, a benefit of the drought is that berry sizes are typically smaller and have more concentrated flavors, which our winemaker believes contributes to the overall quality of this year's harvest.

About The Vineyard

Clinging to Oak Mountain overlooking the Russian River in Sonoma County's famous Alexander Valley is a vineyard spanning over 900 vertical feet with a climate that is ideal for growing Tempranillo, Spain's beloved red wine grape. While summer daytime temperatures are hot enough to suit these heat-loving red grapes, the rapid cooling effect of evening fog from the nearby Pacific Ocean protects their flavor-boosting acidity as they ripen. Rocky, well-drained soils and multiple blocks with varying exposures produce grapes that are incredibly small; at harvest they literally burst in the mouth with intense fruit flavor.

Winemaking

Gently hand-picked at night, at the peak of ripeness, the grapes for this wine were promptly brought over to the winery, where they were de-stemmed, but not crushed. Fruit was then placed in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks, for a three day cold soak followed by a an 18 day fermentation designed to extract color, flavor and tannin from the grape skins. Following fermentation, 100% of the young wine was transferred to French oak barrels and 40% were new wood, imbuing the wine with subtle oak nuances and texture. The wine aged for 22 months in barrel, with three rackings prior to bottling.

Tasting Notes

This Tempranillo offers intense varietal expression and captures the essence of this unique varietal, when produced in California. Beginning with intense aromas of boysenberry, blueberry and cassis, these notes continue on the palate and are layered with sweet flavors of dark cherry and blackberry. Rich tannins complement the lushness of the fruit, and the subtle oak notes adds to the length of the finish. This is a wine with true varietal character of the old world wines of Rioja, Spain with a new world style that is only California from Artesa.