

RED Varietal Characteristics

Tablas Creek Vineyard Clonal Notes

Mourvèdre provides structure, backbone, and aging potential. It tastes of ripe plum and strawberry fruit, with animal flavors of red meat and mushrooms when young, and leather and truffles as it ages. Dark purple-black color.

Historically, Mourvèdre was the most widely planted grape in the Southern Rhone before Phylloxera decimated vineyards in the late 1800s. Replanting was slow, as rootstocks for Mourvèdre were developed only after World War II.

Syrah provides firm tannin and aromatics, as well as blackberry and currant fruit. It tastes of smoke, tar, and black pepper. Intense dark blood red color.

Syrah is best known from the Northern Rhone appellations of Hermitage and Côte-Rotie, where it produces wines of phenomenal elegance and longevity. It is tremendously flexible, and can be made in styles from elegant and restrained to wines bursting with fruit, in locations as diverse as France, California, South Africa and Australia (where it is known as Shiraz).

Grenache Noir provides fruit, tannins, and acidity. It tastes of currant, cherry, and raisin, with aromatic spice of black pepper, menthol, and licorice. Brilliant ruby red color.

Grenache (also known as Grenache Noir) is the most widely planted grape in the Rhone Valley. It is vigorous, and at high production, makes wines that are simple, friendly and approachable. When production is restricted, Grenache can assume tremendous depth and longevity.

Counoise tastes of blueberry and strawberry fruit with spice notes of cinnamon and nutmeg. It has soft tannins and is a ripe purple-red color.

One of the lesser-known varieties, Counoise's appealing spice and soft tannins act as a compliment to the more tannic higher-alcohol varieties, such as Syrah. Counoise was first brought into the United States by Tablas Creek, and recognized by the BATF in 2000.

TCVS A — Late budbreak avoids most frost damage. Matures late in the harvest cycle, averaging 3 tons per acre. Low disease pressure. Moderate vigor with medium sized clusters and smallish berries. Works well in close spacing with adequate water. Upright growth adapts well to either trellised cordon or head-pruning. Great intensity of color. Rich, full nose of dark fruits. Well structured meaty wines with hints of cherries, prunes and game. Average brix at harvest 24.5 to 27.5, with pH of 3.3 to 3.7. TA .58. Mourvèdre must be harvested fully ripe. Ample budwood available. Cellar treatment: Destemmed only, part open top, part tank fermentation in 1200 gallon foudre. Native malo and yeasts.

TCVS B — Similar to A, but slightly less intense. Average brix at harvest 24 with pH of 3.7-4.5. Budwood limited. Cellar treatment: Similar, but with all open top tank fermentation in 132 gallon barrel.

TCVS A — Early to mid budbreak with early ripening. Vigorous producer with low disease pressure. Best to reduce vigor with tight spacing, keeping low yields. Averages three tons per acre. Ample budwood available. Wines are very dark purple-red. Incredible structure with strong tannins. Jammy, fruity, spicy wines with hints of leather, typical of Syrah. Moderate size bunches of smallish berries. Graft to 140R in calcareous soils to avoid chlorosis. Average brix at harvest 25 with a pH of 3.5. Cellar treatment: Destemmed only, open top fermentation in 1200 gallon foudre. Native yeasts and malo.

TCVS C — Less vigorous than clone A. Intense, dark, well structured, rich and peppery wines, very typical of Syrah. Small bunches with small berries, a little softer than A. Average brix at harvest 25 with a pH of 3.5. Cellar treatment: Similar to clone A, but 180 gallon barrels used.

TCVS A — Very vigorous. Produces best when closely planted in less fertile soils with good drainage. Quality best when production held to 3 tons/acre. Good sized bunches with medium sized berries. Good resistance to dry conditions. Fairly early budbreak, mid ripening. Mildew and Botrytis sensitive. Harvest after Syrah and before Counoise. Well colored, peppery big wines with strawberries, cherries, and other red fruits. A rich mouth feel, carries good acidity to a long finish. Generally high brix at harvest. Our average has been 25 to 28 with pH's of 3.2 to 3.5. Ample budwood available. Cellar treatment: destemmed only, 60 gallon barrels, Native yeasts and malo.

TCVS B — Vigorous and productive. Needs to be closely planted with production held to 3.5 tons/acre. Somewhat more fruity, but less structured than A. Otherwise similar growing and harvesting conditions to A.

TCVS C — Moderately vigorous. Needs to be more closely planted with production held to 3.5 tons/acre. Smallish bunches with moderate sized berries. Intense and fruity, yet less structured than TCVS A. Nicely balanced wines with power and elegance. Tolerates dry conditions. Similar growing and harvesting conditions to A. Limited budwood available.

TCVS D — Similar growing and harvesting conditions to both A and B. Not yet in production. Reputed to produce well balanced and structured wines.

TCVS A — Mid to late budbreak and ripening. Moderate vigor. Moderate mildew pressure. Produces best when closely planted and held to 3 to 3.5 tons/acre. Moderate sized bunches with good sized berries. Voluptuously fruity, well colored, soft red wines showing blueberry, licorice and rose petal. Holds good acidity. Ripens after Syrah and Grenache, but earlier than Mourvèdre. Average brix in our experience is 23.5 to 25.5 with a pH of 3.4 to 3.6. Ample budwood available. Cellar treatment: destemmed only, all stainless steel tank fermentation. Native yeasts and malo.

WHITE Varietal Characteristics

Tablas Creek Vineyard Clonal Notes

Roussanne provides golden color, excellent aging potential, and tastes of honey and honeysuckle fruit. It has rose and nutty aromatics, with a rich glycerin mouth feel and moderate acidity.

Roussanne is often confused with Viognier, and many California vineyards planted Viognier in the late 1990's thinking it was Roussanne.

Viognier is highly aromatic, with a nose of peach, apricot, and violets. It has a mineral mouth with peach flavor and moderate acidity. Pale pink-gold color.

Viognier is grown in the northern Rhone Valley, and reaches its peak in the appellations of Condrieu and Chateau Grillet. In California, it produces richer, more tropical wines, often low in acidity. It is sometimes confused with Roussanne.

Grenache Blanc has firm acidity, green apple and citrus flavors, and white flower aromatics.

Grenache Blanc is the 4th most widely planted white grape in France, and its crisp acids complement many of the lower-acid white Rhone varieties. Tablas Creek was the first winery to import Grenache Blanc into the United States, and it was recognized by the BATF in 2003.

Marsanne tastes of melon and minerals, and has a golden straw color.

Marsanne is a flexible and adaptable grape found throughout the Rhone Valley. It reaches its peak in the appellation of Hermitage in the Northern Rhone, where it is often blended with Roussanne. Its tendency to pick up mineral character from the soils makes it an important piece of many wines.

TCVS A — Late budbreak saves it from most spring frosts. Harvests in late to mid-cycle. Low vigor. Mildew and Botrytis sensitive. Small bunches and small berries. Needs some water. Best planted in close spacing. Our production averages 2.5 to 3 tons/acre with average brix of 24 to 24.5 and pH 3.4 to 3.7. Aromatic wines, floral and honey-like, with hints of apricot and wet stones. Good acidity. Produces a rich elegant wine with good aging potential. Ample budwood available. Cellar treatment: Whole cluster pressing, 50% barrel fermentation, 50% tank fermentation. Native yeasts and malo.

TCVS A — Rather sparse producing variety inclined toward early budbreak and early harvest. Medium vigor and moderate mildew pressure. Pruned at TCV in cane and spur fashion. Small clusters of berries with average production of 2 tons/acre. Well balanced fruit and acidity. Floral, stone fruits, and pear flavors along with apples and strong mineral notes. Depending on the vintage, we sometimes stop the malolactic at some point in order to preserve acidity. Average brix at harvest 23.5 to 25.5, pH 3.5 to 3.7. Ample budwood available. Cellar treatment: whole cluster pressing, 75% neutral wood, 25% stainless steel. Native yeasts and malo.

TCVS A — Vigorous and productive. Early to mid budbreak and mid ripening. Moderate mildew and Botrytis pressure. Needs to be closely planted with productions held to 3.5tons/acre. A revelation in our climate and calcareous soils! Heady, structured, citrus, fruity and mineral wines. Holds great acidity at high sugars. Large clusters with moderately large berries. Resists dry conditions well. Cordon prune. Average brix at harvest 25 to 27 with pH of 3.2 to 3.4. Ample budwood available. Cellar treatment: whole cluster pressing, 90% stainless steel. Native yeasts and malo.

TCVS A — Vigorous healthy producer. Large clusters of medium sized berries. Later budbreak than Viognier, Grenache and Chardonnay. Harvest in mid-cycle. Wine is honey straw scented and flavorful at lower alcohols than Roussanne. Average brix at harvest 22.5 to 24 with a pH of 3.3 to 3.5.

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