



Growing Conditions

If we were to use just one word to define this vintage it would have to be BALANCE. The gods smiled and let loose the rains. The natural accumulation of salt buildup, typical in semi-arid climates like ours, was washed away leaving the soil cleansed and refreshed. The vines responded with a profusion of foliage and fruit. With respect to such vigorous growth, balance is critical.

In the case of the '05 crop, there were plenty of energy producing leaves to support healthy development of abundant fruit clusters. This can be a very desirable circumstance for a viticulturist. Not only does it lighten the farmer's intrinsic anxiety load and allow for sounder sleep, it provides excellent opportunity for fine tuning. By dropping fruit and pulling leaves, a conscientious grower can focus the vine's energy expenditures or facilitate ventilation or affect sun exposure – small adjustments aimed at further refining the delicate balance of growth factors. Thus a season like '05, with plenty of growth – both leaf and fruit – provides the winegrower with a significant advantage in terms of management options and the ability to cultivate the best quality fruit possible. And, as the apple does not fall far from the tree, great wines are reflections of their vines.

Tasting Notes

Electric violet, sweet blueberry, ink, pluot, white pepper, cured meat – a riotous perfume, irresistible in its appeal – This is the second year we've worked with fruit from Ampelos and, if Purisima is the golden girl, then Ampelos must be the young Adonis – all rippling muscle, vibrating energy and exuberant charisma. Our ¾ acre section of the vineyard is planted with 100% Estrella clone on the loamy clay of a gradual west facing slope. These are young vines planted in 2001. In the glass, there is a concentrated core of pulsating black fruits and chunky velvet tannins swirled with a flamboyant splash of spice. High octane juice.

...combines some crushed rock notes with blueberry, blackberry, and floral notes. It is full-bodied, shows superb purity, richness of fruit, and a nicely layered mouthfeel. This wine should drink nicely for 5-6 years. 91 points
Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate

Production Notes

140 cases produced
Harvested October 7, 2005
Native Yeast for both Primary and Malolactic Fermentations
Not Fined and Not Filtered