

2012 Grenache | John Sebastiano Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley



Winemaker
Adam Tolmach



Blend: 100% Grenache
Vineyard: John Sebastiano
AVA: Santa Ynez Valley
Alcohol: 13.5%
Vinification: 100% Neutral French Oak
Barrel Aging: 16 Months
Total Production: 209 Cases



Winemaker's Notes

John Sebastiano Vineyard was planted in 2007 and had its first crop in 2010. It is located on the northeastern edge of the Santa Rita Hills appellation way up in the hills so it catches the breezes that come in from the ocean at Vandenberg Air Force Base. The vineyard is mostly inside the appellation and mostly planted to pinot noir; however there is some syrah and grenache planted just over the line and that is where we get our fruit. The vines were planted on a steep southern slope and the soil has quite a bit of clay with some shale-y bits that pop through here and there. The vines struggle to produce a full canopy and the fruit ripens late in October or early November, but each year the wine possesses a knockout aroma of crushed raspberries with a solid structure of tannin and plentiful freshness.

Vineyard manager Ruben Solorzano pays attention to every detail, which is good because grenache is finicky. Assuming flowering goes well; grenache produces clusters that are so big that they need to be individually hand trimmed in order for the fruit to mature evenly. Also, the clusters become bleached if they received too much sunlight, so Ruben trains the vines in a way to encourage just the right amount of shading. This extra effort really shows in the finished wine, as each year the color of the wine is dark and the flavors are impressive.

This vineyard has shocked us with how much personality the wines from here have. Planted on the climatic edge where the vines barely are able to ripen their fruit, the structure of the wine is different than what I have seen in California, or for that matter from the southern Rhone and Spain. The piercing aromas are repeated in the flavor of the wine, and instead of having a syrupy richness that is typical from warmer sites, the palate is carried with sharp tannins and bright acidity, making it a fabulous food wine that works great even in warm weather.

Press Reviews

Antonia Galloni's Vinous

"The 2012 Grenache John Sebastiano Vineyard bursts from the glass with racy dark red cherries. Sweet floral and spice notes appear later, but the 2012 is essentially a wine built on fruit. Dark red cherry, plum and menthol wrap around the succulent finish. This is a striking Grenache from Ojai." - AG

93+

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