

T O R

TOR ROCK Grenache Cuvee Cooper, 2006

Vintage

The 2006 vintage was another cool vintage for the Napa and Sonoma Valleys. Bud break happened a little earlier than 'normal' and the wet ground from all the rain from the winter allowed for the vines to set a healthy crop. This good set of fruit allowed for us to thin the vineyards back through multiple fruit dropping passes to the crop level that we desired, which for Grenache is always 1 cluster per shoot, and thinning latter in the season. This season was marked more by what did not happen as opposed to what did happen. It was a very even, cool, steady growing season without any significant heat spikes or rains other than a bit of rain in the first week of October.

Vineyard

The Judge Vineyard is located in the cool sub appellation called Bennett Valley which in in Sonoma County just South of Santa Rosa. This area receives some of the coolest breezes from the Pacific ocean and retains its fog/marine layer longer than almost anywhere else in Northern California. This cool climate allows for extremely long hang times and a very different flavor profile than any other California Grenache you might have tried and tastes far more like a true Chateauneuf than anything else. This site provides fruit that emphasizes the cooler climate flavors of cracked black pepper/earth and smoke. Almost always our last pick of the year, Bennett Valley is an area which is just now gaining recognition for the extraordinary Rhone varietal wines that it is producing.

Winemaking

Grenache is for us a labor of love. The purity of the Grenache fruit and its subtle layers of flavors pull you in and never let you go. For our Grenache we use totally de-stemmed fruit with less new French Burgundy barrels than our other Rhone wines. Utilizing mostly manual punch downs we seek to gently extract the classic flavors of clove, wet earth, boysenberry and spice. The Grenache like the Syrahs is fermented using only its own wild/native yeasts and then transferred to barrel to complete fermentation and is then bottled both unfinned and unfiltered.

The Wine

Pale ruby color in the glass give the first hint that this is true Grenach. On the nose there is graphite, baking spices, earth and raw meats. On the palate it is full weight with very firm/bracing acids and grip. It shows cherry, white chocolate, peppermint and bay leaf. Truly as close to a California Chateauneuf as you are likely to find with its purity and balance and true Grenache soul.



"A tasty, deep
ruby/purple-tinged
Grenache offering sweet
aromas of kirsch and
loamy soil, terrific fruit,
and medium body... an
outstanding example of
Grenache"

Rated 89-91 by
Robert M. Parker, Jr.,
"The Wine Advocate"