



# IDLEWILD *Wines*

## *2014 Arneis, Fox Hill Vineyard*

### *Vineyard*

Fox Hill Vineyard is without a doubt one of the most unique vineyards in Northern California. One of its true beauties is that it has remained relatively unknown. Located southeast of Ukiah on Mendocino's Talmage Bench, the soils are well drained with high concentrations of gravel and sandstone, and the farming is as old fashioned and straight forward as it gets. What makes this site so unique though is the fact that Lowell Stone decided to buck every trend and simply plant what he was interested in planting. Many trips to Italy turned to inspiration and the wild spectrum of varieties began to take root. There are two blocks that I work with due to their more sheltered and north facing (read cooler) aspects. The Arneis sits in sandy, gravelly, well-drained soils that foster naturally balanced vines.

### *Vintage*

The 2014 vintage had everyone worried. The long-term effects of the worst drought in recorded history coupled with an early bud-break had growers and winemakers sweating and on edge. But, grapevines planted in the right spot and raised without excess watering can easily handle dry years in stride (in-fact they evolved to do just that). I think and hope that 2014 will go down in history as the year that those who irrigate their vines liberally realized they have been overwatering and wasting a resource for years. On the wine side of things, 2014's scary start gave way to a moderate summer. Harvest was early, but the overall hang-time was more than ample for great depth of flavor. In fact, the wines of 2014 truly possess my favorite qualities: depth and richness in flavor paired against great vibrancy and structure.

### *Winemaking*

I changed a couple things with the Arneis for 2014. While in past years I had always enjoyed the initial aromatics, I found myself let down by the evolution of the structure. This isn't to say the prior vintages were lacking; but rather, I still had exploration to do. To start things off, the Arneis was picked a fair bit earlier while the acidity was still at nearly painful levels. Second, the juice was directly pressed but left on all of its solids and lees. Third, the wine went through both native primary and secondary fermentation (in past years secondary was inhibited), and that intense acidity just softened perfectly while still staying vibrant and pure. Lastly, the wine was aged on lees (without any stirring) for four months in neutral French oak.

### *Wine*

The aromatics are more tightly wound but even more expansive on the 2014 with notes of fresh wildflower air, macerated jasmine, almonds, tart white peach, tarragon, Asian pear, honeydew melon, pine tips, and salty sea air. The mid palate adds a very pleasant saline like softness that is fully driven through via clean acidity. A slight note of pleasant bitter almond and blossoms echoes through the finish.

150 cases produced.