



IDLEWILD *Wines*

2014 The Bird, Flora and Fauna Red

Vineyard

Flora and Fauna loosely means the collection of plant and animal life of a certain epoch. In my version, it is the collection of varietals from the cellar and also from my ideas that make up the blend for the year. For 2014, The Bird is comprised of roughly 60% Dolcetto, 30% Nebbiolo, and 10% Barbera. While the wine is designated as Mendocino County, the majority of the fruit in fact comes from Fox Hill Vineyard. Located southeast of Ukiah on Mendocino's Talmage Bench, the soils are well drained with high concentrations of gravel and sandstone. In contrast to the varietal bottling of these wines, these grapes are from sections of the vineyard that yield softer structure and are handled with this early to bottle style in mind.

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

All three of these varieties have structure and at the same time a joyous side. The focus in fermentation was to build enough structure for a very versatile food wine but also to emphasize the exuberant and delicious elements of each grape. To do this, the wines were left largely whole cluster and all fermentations started with carbonic maceration. That being said, none of them were pushed to be fully carbonic wines. Instead, the initial lift in aromatics and push on frothy fresh fruits was achieved, and then I fully treaded the wines to allow fermentation to switch to a more standard flow. This gave a backbone and savory qualities to act as bass notes to the carbonic high tones. All of the wines were pressed a touch early to ensure that that tannic structure was appropriate for a shorter time in barrel, just four months in neutral oak.

Wine

In Italy, the house wine is often light, fresh, aromatic, and firmly structured so as to pair beautifully next a wide range of foods. That is the inspiration for The Bird. Black cherries, anise, fresh strawberries, freshly turned soil, and spicy floral tones highlight the aromatic profile. The mouthfeel is fresh and bright, leans towards a touch of mouth filling richness, and then quickly moves to a clean and firm food driven finish.

350 cases produced.