



IDLEWILD *Wines*

2013 Nebbiolo, 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 follow his passion, to buck every market trend, and to 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. The cooler tree sheltered and northwest facing blocks that I source from are appropriately planted with varietals that originate in Italy's Piemonte. Nebbiolo is said to be one of the most difficult varietals to grow outside of its original home, but the balance, grace, and power shown on the soils of Fox Hill Vineyard point to a new future.

Vintage

2013 started with a pistol shot and was off to the races. A month into the season, there were predictions of the earliest harvest in recent memory. Then, rains and stretches of unseasonably cool weather came through in the summer. Nature nearly corrected the timetables back to normal. The resulting fruit seems to show both influences: both a sense of richness (the hallmark of heat) as well as a delicate and tightly balanced edge (the hallmark of more temperate weather). In the end, it seems the 2013 fruit made for wines of balance and purity, though simultaneously they give a broader aromatic spectrum and depth.

Winemaking

With 2013, I continued to explore with Nebbiolo in terms of harvest protocol, though in some ways it was a year of simplification. Rather than trialing multiple ideas, the fruit was all treated the same. After a gentle destemming, a very light punchdown regime took place over the 12 day fermentation. The wine was left on skins through dryness and then pressed to neutral oak barrels where it underwent secondary fermentation and 20 months of elevage with just one racking. After bottling, an additional 9 months of bottle aging was also employed.

Wine

The nose is tightly concentrated with layers of dried cherry, black cherry, anise, macerated roses, chalk like minerals, forest leaves, and tar. The mouthfeel has a progression from grace to density to strength. While the tannin structure is chalky and firm now, additional time will allow evolution and opening.

148 cases produced.