



IDLEWILD *Wines*

2015 Dolcetto, 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 are appropriately planted with varietals that originate in Italy's Piemonte. They say that the Piemontese bleed Dolcetto as it is the favored daily wine of the region. While a rather jovial variety, Dolcetto does have a serious side that when shown in balance highlights the grape's ability to be compelling.

Vintage

In 2015, the early season and long-term effects of the drought began to feel like a broken record. The cycle was on repeat for four years, each one worse than before. But, as with all of the other years in this pattern, the oddly cool Summer months seemed to moderate the effects of the unseasonably warm Winter and Spring. In the end, harvest began early and furiously fast. While staying aware of the fast onset of ripening, it became apparent that the season was going to condense and be 'all at once'. After the first nine days of harvest, I had brought in 75% of the season's fruit. Mother nature always has a way of keeping us on our toes. As with the prior three years though, proper harvesting decisions still yielded great acidity and structure to back up the density of fruit being yielded by the early year.

Winemaking

The grapes were brought in and dumped and pitch forked to larger fermenting bins where they were partially foot trodden, and all of the stems were included. This practice lends several things including floral lift, spice, and structure; and, it also leads to a very healthy fermentation. Native yeast and bacteria were responsible for the primary and secondary fermentations. As the wine neared dryness, it was basket pressed and then put down to neutral barrels for nearly ten months.

Wine

Fermented 100% whole cluster with partial foot treading, this vintage shows the contrast of bright freshness against firm structure that I love seeing in Dolcetto. The nose shows black cherry, almond, anise, fresh soil, allspice, and cinnamon stick. The mouth is medium bodied with freshness and firm tannin on the finish. It is joyful and fully serious all at once.

248 cases produced.