

BUTTONWOOD

Overview

A delicate and lighter-bodied red wine with spicy, berry flavors. Our inaugural release of estate Grenache!

In the Vineyard

2004 brought a phenomenon to the Santa Ynez Valley called “Sideways”. Although the film introduced many people to our unique winegrowing paradise, one little sentence uttered in the movie (you know which one we’re talking about!) gave us cause to reduce our acreage of the much maligned Merlot. In 2008, we grafted a little over an acre and a quarter from Merlot to Grenache with a thought to complement our red Rhone program and because we thought the rocky soils of that sun-drenched area of the vineyard would prove perfect for Grenache. We watched the vines transform themselves from Merlot to Grenache and in 2009 we were excited to work with our first fruit of this intriguing new-to-us varietal. As expected, the happy vines produced an incredible crop, which kept vineyard manager Armando Zepeda on his toes! Careful pruning, lots of fruit dropping and cluster by cluster “grooming” was required with wings and shoulders clipped off each cluster. It was an interesting, exciting and educational first year of fine-tuning our viticultural practices for Grenache’s unique characteristics.

The Vintage

2009 had few hiccups throughout the growing season and was almost leisurely from a growing and harvest point of view. A mild springtime resulted in timely bud-break and grape set, with few weather related issues during those critical periods. August, however, threw a curve at us with record high temperatures over a 5 day period, which hastened ripening and resulted in sunburn on the southern side of the canopy (bleaching some of the color from the skins), as this section of the vineyard lies west-east. Any raisined clusters were removed, still with a good crop load on the vine. October 22nd brought a very unusual harvest rainstorm, helping us to make the decision to pick that day as flavors were good and acids, pH and brix in balance.

Winemaking

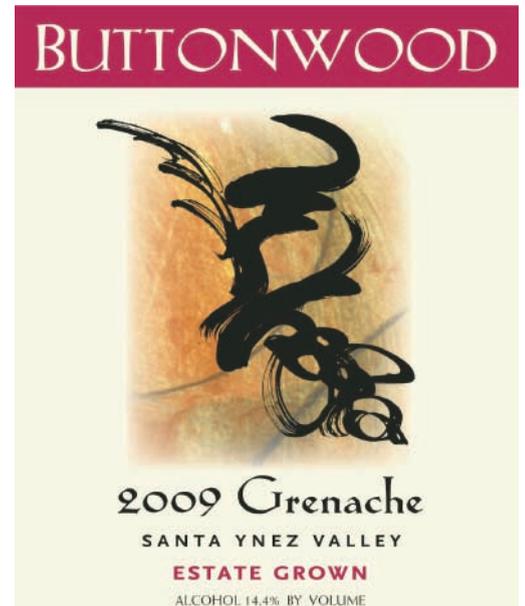
We hand harvested and field sorted the large, pine-cone shaped clusters leaving behind any with raisining in the vineyard, then immediately de-stemmed the clusters into 1-ton open top fermenters. These were placed into our cold room for 2 days to encourage extraction prior to the onset of fermentation. The must was inoculated with GRE yeast and then punched down 2-3 times per day until dryness, when the new wine was gently moved to neutral barrels and puncheons. The 2009 Grenache was racked once, in August of 2010 when a barrel selection and blend was determined (95% Grenache, 5% Syrah). The wine was bottled with light filtration and no fining in February of 2011. Allowed to rest in bottle in our cellar for seven months, the inaugural estate 2009 Grenache was first released to Imbibers Club members in September, 2011. This wine is suitable for vegans.

Tasting Notes

A light ruby color glistens in the glass and foretells of the lighter nature of the wine. On the nose, floral and fruity aromas of orange blossom, rose petal and strawberries waft from the glass, inviting a first sip. Juicy and yet grippy on the palate, the 2009 Grenache brings flavors of red currant and bing cherry to the taste buds, enveloped in earthy tannins and cran-apple acidity. Reminders of violets linger, with spicy highlights of allspice and pepper. The finish is sharp and refreshing, with hints of raspberries and rocky earthiness. This wine blossoms with some time in the glass, and was quite delicious the day after opening.

Pairing ideas

Nice with mild cheeses such as gouda or fontina as a wine & cheese party. Great with roast poultry dishes – turkey, quail or game hens.



Grown, Produced and Bottled by Buttonwood Farm Winery
1500 Alamo Pintado Road, Solvang, California 93463
805.688.3032 • www.ButtonwoodWinery.com • info@ButtonwoodWinery.com