

BUTTONWOOD

P.O.S.H. is a plush and post dessert wine, made from late harvest Syrah and fortified in a port-style.

In the Vineyard

Our block 3 Syrah runs east to west and is normally reserved for Rosé. The grapes for that perfectly pink wine are picked early in the season, but quite the opposite for the rows destined for POSH, which are left on the vine until the very end of the season to turn to intensely flavored raisins. As with the rest of the vineyard, this block of Syrah is on its own roots, planted in a conventional 8x10 row spacing and cane pruned.

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, brought a heat spike with record high temperatures over a 5 day period, which hastened ripening and resulted in some dehydration and raisining on the southern “sun side” of the canopy (great for this wine!) We embraced this raisining, and picked the grapes at 29 brix the week before Thanksgiving.

Winemaking

Definitely the last grapes to come into the winery at the very end of November, we fired up the de-stemmer one last time and let the berries fall into an open top fermenter. After a few days of cool-soak to extract color and spice from the skins, the raisin-y grapes were inoculated with a cultured yeast. Punched down twice each day to continue the integration of skin goodness with juice, fermentation was carefully monitored. At 15° Brix, the free run wine was drained and the skins pressed to barrel, with fermentation continuing for another 5 degrees of sugar. At that point the fermentation was stopped by the addition of unaged grape brandy. This fortification resulted in a sweet dessert wine with a 20% alcohol level. Once fortified, the wine was racked off its lees frequently during the early time of its aging process, but once solids had all been removed the wine was left in barrel without any topping. In this particular style of winemaking, oxidation is good! The 2009 POSH aged for 27 months in neutral French Oak puncheons prior to being bottled in 375ml traditional bottles in February 2012.

Tasting Notes

A deep, dark garnet color with beautiful clarity predicts of the richness of this dessert wine. Hints of mocha mingle with brandy-type aromas at first swirl, and dried berry notes join in as the wine warms in the glass. The velvety texture of the wine envelopes the palate with a first sip and brings Belgian chocolate, “real” black licorice and dried raspberry/framboise flavors to the taste buds. The sweetness is well integrated with the alcohol, and layers of fig, dried berry and chocolate persist on the finish. P.O.S.H. is “posh” by definition – elegant, rich, exclusive. No wonder we named it after that old-world and upper class sailing acronym, “Port Out, Starboard Home.”

Pairing ideas

Chocolate Souffle, molten chocolate pudding, a hard, salty cheese.

