

JUSTIN

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2004 Reserve Tempranillo

Vintage Summary

The 2004 vintage began with relatively low rainfall. Dry soils and a warm February resulted in an early bud break. Spring generated ideal weather, limiting heat spikes and allowing vines to produce full, dense canopies. In early June, we removed laterals and selective leaves to manipulate the canopy, and allow filtered light to penetrate the clusters. The warmest summer since 1997 produced consecutive months of 90-degree temperatures. Veraison came early and was very even, allowing us to drop any discolored or green fruit left prior to harvest. August was nearly perfect, with only one day jumping above 100 degrees. September remained generally warm, providing a perfect climate for harvesting ripe fruit while still maintaining natural acidity.

Vineyard Practices

Our Reserve Tempranillo was made in the traditional style of Spanish Riojas. Aggressively pruning the vines helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. In June, shoots were around 6 to 8 inches, and we removed any growth not intentionally left at pruning. Tempranillo is a thick-skinned variety that favors intense heat, which allows its skins to ripen while retaining the varieties natural acidity. To help intensify color, ripen the tannins in those thick skins and maintain healthy vines, we increased sun exposure and air circulation by removing laterals and creating a tunnel through the middle of the canopy. Tempranillo clusters tend to be large and have shoulders or wings and very large berries. During set, we starved the vines of water to promote small berries and clusters. Prior to veraison, we removed any shoulders and wings to ensure we had even maturity throughout the vineyard. Each shoot was reduced down to one cluster, knowing that Tempranillo grapes pH and acid levels correspond with crop load. The warm, consistent temperatures allowed us to pick in early October.

Winemaking Practices

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, our crusher-destemmer removed all of the stems and lightly crushed the grapes. The must (crushed grapes) was then placed in a stainless steel tank. The grape juice was cold soaked for 48 hours to help intensify color and phenolics. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense earthy and spicy characteristics, fermented the wine to dryness over an eight-day period, but stayed on skins for 3 weeks total. During fermentation, the Tempranillo was pumped over twice per day for 45 minutes. We aerated the wine to expose it to oxygen throughout the fermentation. This helps reduction of Hydrogen Sulfide (rotten egg aromas), and helps fixate color. Delestage, a process of racking the wine from tank and returning on top of the skins with a high-powered pump, was performed 3 times throughout the 22-day maceration. Malolactic fermentation took place in barrel to help integrate the 26% new American Oak.

Tasting Notes

Inky black in color with a light violet edge, this 2004 Tempranillo is all about the style of Rioja. The nose is complex with earthy tones of mushroom, leather and a hint of dust. The entry is soft and velvety, with layers of soft, supple red fruit that evolves into a textured mid palate. The wine finishes clean, with rich, round tannins, amazingly elegant for such a young wine. Hints of vanilla and toasted oak balance the finish and put an exclamation point on the complexity of this 100% Tempranillo.

Specifics

Barrel aging: 18 months in 225-L oak barrels, 26% new

Blended: 6/17/2005

Harvest dates: 10/1/2004

Brix at Harvest: 25.6

Harvest method: 100% hand-harvested

Fermentation: 8 days with UV-43

Maceration: 22 days including fermentation

Total Acidity: .63 g/100ml

Pump overs: 2 times daily during fermentation

Yeasts: UV-43

Barrel replacement: 20-30% annually on average

Racking: every 3 months

Fining: none

Filtering: none

Bottled: May 22, 2006

pH: 3.81

Alcohol: 15.0%

Barrels: Minnesota