



2018 Grenache Santa Cruz Mtns.

There is, in my view, no other region in California that compares to the Santa Cruz Mountains for producing wines of distinctive terroir expression. Something about its mountain soils and mix of sandstone and greenstone, plus the lush surrounding herbs that encircle its tiny vineyards and impart their own distinctive “air-oir” gives each vineyard a unique stamp. The area is moderated by heavy Pacific influence but also lifted above the fog so that it enjoys plenty of cool direct sunlight, the perfect recipe for the grape to express itself.

Because of this, most of the region is best suited to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, of which there are many stunning examples. The Bates Ranch is located in the sheltered Corralitos region just south of Ridge Vineyards, and is famous for their Cabernet Sauvignon, while their Grenache, less well known, is also quite wonderful.

The nose is instantly alluring. One expects from your basic Grenache a simple strawberry aroma, but here we have in support of its bright fruitiness an intriguing collection of melon, droughty “garrigue” herbs, saddle leather and Asian spice. The mouth is medium bodied with fine tannins and energetic minerality

As a result, the wine is more complex and intriguing than a simple picnic wine but is certainly suitable for an outing in some summer meadow with a basket full of chicken and three-bean salad with sun-dried tomatoes. Its tannins are more solid than previous vintages, so it would serve well with a steak. It loves game, from venison to quail and is magic with Hunanese stir-fried beef in garlic black bean sauce.

My goal is to produce skillfully crafted wines that explore winemaking possibilities beyond the contemporary mainstream.

Vineyard Location: Bates Ranch
Corralitos subregion, Santa Cruz Mountains
8th leaf of experimental planting

Harvest Date: 23 October 2018

Harvest Sugar: 23.2 Brix

Fermentation techniques:
100% crush/destem
Anchor VN112 yeast inoculum
7 gm/L untoasted Alliers chips, air seasoned 2 yrs

Elevage details:
Malolactic fermentation in barrel
Neutral French oak aged 29 months
TA 6.7 g/L, pH 3.73 at bottling
Alcohol 14.0%

203 cases produced.

For more details, visit www.winesmithwines.com

Clark Smith, Winemaker