

## **Forth Vineyards**

Healdsburg, CA

### **Winemaker's Notes – 2017 & 2018 Histoire Grenache**

AVA: Mendocino  
Brix: Harvested from a single organic vineyard block at 23 brix, pH 3.40  
Fermentation: Warm fermented in a small batch for seven days  
Barrel aging: Used French and American oak for eighteen months.  
Blend: 94% Grenache Noir 6% Syrah for 2017 and 100% Grenache 2018  
Production: 174 cases (2017) and 145 cases (2018)

The vineyard in Mendocino's Redwood Valley (Hidden Hawk Ranch) was transitioning to organic farming in 2017 which meant that the farmer had already ceased the use of all non-organic products on the vineyard. No Roundup, no chemical fertilizers, no insecticides – just nature's own products. In private and with friends, we call this the 'hot tub Grenache' because the deal was sealed in the hot tub at our athletic club. Yes, we are a little informal here in Sonoma County. A grape sale can be made almost anywhere, but it's more normal for it to happen at the market, in a bar, or over the phone.

Redwood Valley tends to have very warm days in summer and unusually cool nights. This diurnal temperature shift is outstanding for growing ripe grapes with good acidity. These qualities have shown up in these two vintages of our excellent Grenache.

Both vintages were fermented dry and allowed to undergo malolactic fermentation in barrel. We kept the wine on its lees for nine months before racking off the clear wine for its next stage of quiet slumber. Before bottling, we filtered the finished wine to maintain safety and purity in the bottle. We have tried it both ways during our twenty-five years of winemaking, and gently filtered wine wins out for clarity, longevity, and taste.

On the nose we find black raspberry with a suggestion that its red cousin has visited as well. There is a hint of kitchen herbs and what I can only describe as the aroma of trampled blackberry bushes after a successful berry-picking session. These carry over onto the palette with good balance and pleasant finish. To us the tannins are fine-grained and reserved. We have been enjoying this wine more and more lately as it has become nicely integrated and a pleasure to consume either as aperitif or with summer dishes. It reminds us of the South of France, a place you can frequently find us.

Please enjoy,  
Gerry Forth, Winemaker and Proprietor  
July 2023