



2005 ISOSCELES

Vintage Summary

The 2005 vintage began with heavily moisturized soils as the result of an extremely wet winter. Early spring remained cool and wet, providing vines with all the water necessary to promote a strong, well developed canopy. Crop loads were up to 25% higher than normal. July and August temperatures lingered in the mid 90's, allowing healthy canopies to absorb the consistent heat and bring veraison quickly. Fall maintained healthy, moderate temperatures around the 88-degree range, allowing the wines to develop phenolics while still maintaining acidity. A quick heat spike in late October provided the necessary degree-days to push the last of the grapes to proper maturity levels.

Production Practices

Aggressively pruning the vines helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. When shoots reach around 6 to 8 inches, we remove any growth not intentionally left at pruning. To help intensify color, ripen tannins and maintain healthy vines, we increased sun exposure and air circulation by removing laterals and creating a tunnel through the middle of the canopy. In May, we removed smaller fruit bearing shoots that might have had difficulty ripening their clusters to decrease production and increase fruit quality. The warm summer helped jump-start the ripening of the unusually heavy crop load. To ensure we had proper maturity throughout the vineyard, we removed green or pink colored fruit and reduced each shoot down to one cluster. Yields of less than 1.5 tons per acre were at perfect crop levels for this unique growing season.

Our winemaking team began sampling the ripening grapes on a regular basis in early September. During the last few weeks before the grapes were picked, we tasted the skins, juice and seeds two to three times per week. We evaluated color, flavor and tannin ripeness to determine the exact harvest date.

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, a sorting area removed any less than perfect clusters. 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. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense cherry and berry characteristics, then fermented the wine to dryness over a twelve-day period. During fermentation, the fermenting wine was pumped over for about 35 minutes up to four times daily to extract the ripe tannins and intense flavors from the skins. The long, consistent growing allowed all three varieties to ripen naturally and evenly. The grapes were picked based on maturity, flavor and acidity. Malolactic fermentation took place in barrel to help incorporate the oak faster. Blending took place in August of 2006. The long growing season and low yields made for a great year for Cabernet Franc, and 15% was added to the blend for its intense black fruit and soft tannins. 7% of Merlot was used to bring bright red fruit and a soft elegance to the wine. After blending, the wine was returned to 100% new French oak barrels for an additional 18 months of aging prior to going to bottle.

Tasting Notes

The 2005 ISOSCELES is dark purple with a slight crimson overtone around the rim. Aromas of boysenberry, leather, mocha, mint and cassis combine with light layers of caramel and vanilla resulting from the extended oak ageing. A soft, fruit forward, elegant entry segues into a mid palate with length and complexity. Seamless, integrated tannins marry with ripe fruit, and flavors of coffee, butterscotch and hint of pencil lead on the finish of this wine. The 2005 ISOSCELES is very young, and will continue to evolve from now through 2025.

Technical Information

Blend: 78% CS, 15% CF, 7% M

Blended: 8/24-8/25, 2006

Pump overs: 2-4 times daily during fermentation

Harvest dates: Merlot 10/12-10/16/05

Cabernet Franc: 11/6-11/27/05

Cabernet Sauvignon 11/10-11/28/05

Harvest method: 100% hand-harvested

Fermentation: 10 to 15 days with UV-43

Maceration: 28 to 35 days including fermentation

Total Acidity: .68 g/100ml

Malolactic fermentation: in barrel

Yeasts: UV-43

Barrel aging: 24 months in 225-L French oak barrels, 65% new

Barrel replacement: 40-60% annually

Racking: every 3 months

Fining: none

Filtering: none

Bottled: December 15-19, 2007

pH: 3.67

Alcohol: 14.6%

Barrels: Center of France, Vosges, Allier, Nevers

Released: March, 2008