



SARACINA MALBEC MENDOCINO COUNTY SKID ROW VINEYARD 2011

Vintage & Appellation

Mendocino County Skid Row Vineyard 2011
Production of 508 cases

Varietal Composition

100% Malbec

Bottling Date

June 21, 2013

Technical Data

13.8 % alcohol by volume
0.63 gm/100 ml titratable acidity
pH 3.84

Release Date

February 1, 2014

Vineyards

Planted in 1999 and farmed organically from the outset, Skid Row Vineyard is the westernmost block on the Saracina Ranch, marked by black clay and gravelly soils at the base of the foothills. The plant material is the original Bordeaux clone 4. It is significant not for what it produces, but for what it doesn't. It is the lowest-yielding commercial Malbec clone available, and on our property typical yields are one and a half tons per acre. It produces concentrated fruit without the need to pick at ultra-high sugars.

The vineyard was named "Skid Row" for the tracks carved into the surrounding hillsides in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by donkeys dragging logs down to the vineyard site, where they were collected to burn hops in the making of beer.

Harvest

The year 2011 was one of the latest harvests on record. A long, cool season did allow for even ripening, although it was painfully slow. Fortunately, our Malbec crop was so light we were able to achieve optimal ripeness with fully mature tannins. We picked on October 17 at an average brix of 23.8.

Winemaking and Cooperage

The grapes were harvested by hand, destemmed and gently fed into the fermenter with 50% whole berries. Native yeast fermentation began in earnest seven days later and was managed with two aerative pumpovers per day until dryness. The wine was drained directly to Taransaud barrels, 20% of which were new. Native malolactic fermentation was complete by early January. The wine rested on light lees for 17 months and was then lightly fined and bottled unfiltered on June 21, 2013.

Winemaker Alex MacGregor

Winemaker's Comments

Black garnet colored, the nose on this wine reveals notes of blueberry, plum, tobacco and tamari. The palate is layered and sappy, with moderate, supple tannins. The wine finishes elegantly, a deep, well balanced Malbec crafted for immediate enjoyment but structured enough to ensure mid-term ageability. Some call Malbec the "new Merlot," and our soft, sunny California-style Skid Row Malbec fits the bill.