

2004 ESPÉRANCE



WINEMAKER'S NOTES

"The 2004 Espérance is the fulfillment of a dream to produce a rich, blended-wine that rivals and mimics the great red wines of Gigondas, and Chateauneuf-du-Pape (both in the Southern Rhone Valley), while retaining a characteristic Andrew Murray Vineyards "estate style." This vintage yields a rich, concentrated wine with aromas and flavors of ultra-ripe strawberries, black cherry, and blueberry, mixed in with the spiciness of cinnamon, vanilla, and crushed black pepper. We'd like to think that the wine strikes a perfect balance between fruit-forward California, and elegant-austere French styles. Actually, we'd much rather think that the wine is just plain delicious, no matter how you choose to describe it."

Espérance is named in homage of a great restaurant and inn in Vezelay, named L'Espérance. We used the inn as a "home-base" for much of our early explorations into the Rhône Valley. We fell in love with the wines of the Southern Rhône during these many trips. "Espérance" translates into "Hope" from French to English. With this wine, we "hope" to not only recreate the great reds of Southern France, but we further "hope" to craft a wine that will inspire your senses the way we were inspired over a decade ago.

Andrew Murray Vineyards is dedicated exclusively to crafting wines from Rhone varieties. This narrow focus, combined with great vineyard partners that feature rocky, well-drained soils, and a very cool microclimate especially well suited for growing great Syrah, Grenache, and Mourvèdre, make for a fantastic setting in which to craft world class wines, possessing immense richness, maturity, and drinkability. This focus is further defined and refined by our "minimalistic handling" approach to winemaking. All of our red wines are hand-picked and "hand-sorted" in the vineyard with an eye for only picking the best fruit. Then the fruit is gently destemmed back into the same picking bins. We then use gravity to transfer the newly destemmed grapes to our open-top fermenters, which vary in size from 1 ton to 5 tons, allowing us the utmost flexibility of keeping differing vineyard lots separate throughout the various winemaking processes. Fermentation is allowed to start "spontaneously" with the indigenous yeast present from the vineyard. All the while, we are punching down 2-4 times per day, depending upon the stage of fermentation. Each different vineyard and each variety are kept separate throughout this entire process which allows us to make the best possible blend. After approximately 9 months of ageing, the blend is assembled, and then transferred back to barriques for further ageing and the "marriage" of the differing flavors.

WINE FACTS

Composition:

70% Grenache 25% Syrah 5% Mourvèdre

Appellation:

Central Coast

Soil:

Well-drained, gravelly, rocky, sandy-loam

Fermentation:

Open top with frequent punchdowns

Elevation:

1200 - 1500 feet

Fermentation:

Open Top

Aged 16 months in French Oak

850 cases produced

Release Date:

June 2006

Alcohol:
15.6%

pH:
3.75

TA:
6.7 g/L