



ANDREW MURRAY VINEYARDS

ESPÉRANCE

40% Grenache 30% Mourvèdre 30% Syrah

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY 2003

Andrew Murray Vineyards is Santa Barbara County's only estate hillside-vineyard dedicated exclusively to Rhone varieties. This narrow focus, combined with rocky, well-drained soils, and a very cool microclimate especially well suited for growing great Syrah, Grenache, and Mourvedre, make for a fantastic setting in which to make 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. The cuvaison lasts from 7 to 21 days, with the decision to run the free-run wine off the skins being made from extensive tastings and experience with our estate fruit. The skins are then pressed in our new and extremely gentle Europress, which yields a press-wine that is most-often worthy of being blended back with the free-run wine. The new wines are next transferred to a mix of new and used French oak barriques where the subsequent ageing takes place. Each different estate 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.

The 2003 Espérance is the fulfillment of a dream to produce a rich, blended-wine from our Estate 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.

WINE FACTS

Composition: 40% Grenache 30% Mourvèdre 30% Syrah

Appellation: Santa Ynez Valley

Soil: Well-drained, gravelly, rocky, sandy-loam

Elevation: 1200 - 1500 feet

Fermentation: Open top with frequent punchdowns

Aged 18 months in French Oak

700 cases produced

Release Date: July 2005

Alcohol: 14.5% pH: 3.75 TA: 6.5 g/L

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

We named this wine 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.

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