

Peay Vineyards

2009 Estate Roussanne/Marsanne, Sonoma Coast

Tasting Notes

Our 0.6 acres of Roussanne and Marsanne are the most trying vines we farm. They ripen very late in the season coming in with the last lots of Syrah sometime in late October or early November. They have tight clusters that may lead to burst berries and as a result can be susceptible to rot late in the season when the fog is heavy. Often we nurse them along by laying silver mylar in between the rows to reflect any available sun. There is a reason people do not grow these varieties in climates as cold as ours. But, these conditions make wines with vitality and purity. That is the ne plus ultra for winemakers who make wines of place: Wine with life, purpose, identity.

The proportion of Roussanne was up in 2009 to about 82% of the blend from the usual 66% composition. The increased amount of Roussanne brings more minerality, higher acidity and lower alcohol (13.0%) as our estate vineyard is a very cold place to grow this grape. The nose on the 2009 *Estate* Roussanne/Marsanne has a briny, flinty quality with unripe pear and green papaya fruit notes. The mouth shares these characteristics with a more metallic quality and less fruit expression. The mouthfeel is focused and round and silky though not from alcohol or oak use as there is no new or even one year old oak used in making the wine. The finish is brisk and clean with good length. This is a cuveé to age as it has the structure to allow a long evolution and develop the nutty, oxidized, honeycomb aromas that some lovers of aged Rhône whites desire. Age for up to 5 years and much longer as desired.

Winemaking Notes

Clones:	65% Roussanne, 35% Marsanne
Harvest dates:	October 21 st and 23 rd
Primary fermentation:	Whole cluster pressed in 100% indigenous in 5 year old French oak barriques
Secondary fermentation:	100% malolactic fermentation
Aging:	No new oak, aged sur lies for 11 months
Production:	80 cases

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Peay Vineyards is located in the northwestern corner of the “true” Sonoma Coast approximately 4 miles from the Pacific Ocean near Sea Ranch. The vineyard sits high on a south facing hilltop formed by the Wheatfield Fork of the Gualala River. Our climate is warm/mild during the day and cool/cold at night with temperatures rarely exceeding ninety degrees with average temperatures in the high seventies/low eighties. The vines sit at 800 feet often enveloped by the coastal fog that shoots up the canyon from the ocean. This accounts for our long growing season and greater development of phenological components of ripeness, fruit complexity and expression of terroir.

We planted the first 30 acres of our 48 acre vineyard in 1998 with the remaining planted in 2001 and 2002. We grow and produce **Pinot noir, Syrah, Chardonnay, Viognier and Roussanne/Marsanne**. We sell, and will continue to sell, fruit to a handful of premier wineries including Williams Selyem Winery. Our winemaker and partner is Vanessa Wong, formerly winemaker at Peter Michael Winery.