



TWOSHEPHERDS

*Cool Climate Rhône Wines That Express Place & Vintage*

## **2012 Pastoral Blanc, Saralee's Vineyard, Russian River Valley**

### **Release Notes**

Pastoral Blanc is my flagship white Rhone blend. The blend will change from vintage to vintage, and is the very best blend that can be crafted, not a wine dumping ground. The goal is to create a white wine with rich texture and viscosity that combines acidity with weight, depth & mouth feel, layered aroma and flavors. Two Shepherds' philosophy towards Rhone wines is that often the sum of the parts often exceeds the whole, like a symphony, each playing a key role. This white cuvée demonstrates this admirably.

After the challenges of 2011 harvest in Russian River Valley, the 2012 vintage was a breeze in comparison. The Roussanne and Marsanne are very special – this planting at Saralee's esteemed vineyard, is the only source of these varieties in the Russian River Valley. The cooler climate and cold foggy nights are more akin to the Northern Rhone than the Southern, and allows longer, gradual ripening that preserves acidity, a key to this blend, designed for years of bottle aging.

### **Winemaking Notes**

Grapes were harvested at various ripeness levels from 21.5 to 24 brix (22.5 average) as I watched closely for proper flavor development, but looked to pick at higher acid, pH levels to give this blend the acidity to go a decade of bottle aging.

Grapes were crushed and fermented as separate lots, with 2-6 hours skin contact prior to crushing. The pressed juice was transferred into neutral French oak barrels, without settling, where it fermented with native yeast. The wine completed malolactic fermentation naturally, and was left on the lees for 4 months, with no additions other than small amounts of SO<sub>2</sub>. In April 2013, extensive blending trials took place, until the final composition was achieved, then bottled in May of 2013, un-fined and unfiltered.

### **Tasting Notes**

The Pastoral Blanc blend requires longer bottle aging longer than my other whites to demonstrate its complexity and balance. It was released in February 2014, as the right balance of aroma, flavor profile, and texture emerged.

The color is light vibrant yellow. The nose is expressive and layered: white peach, apricot, melon, honeysuckle, tropical notes. On the palate, the aroma profile carries over combined with citrus and stone fruits. The finish lingers with weight, spice, food friendly acidity, and a hint of minerality. This is a complex white wine that is enjoyable now, and will reward cellaring as it gains more opulence and density.

The neutral oak and sur lees aging enhance the natural weight and viscosity of the Marsanne and Roussanne, making Pastoral Blanc an excellent choice to pair with Dungeness crab, shrimp or scallops. This elegant wine will compliment a wide range of foods from seafood, roasted chicken, grilled & root vegetables.

*To fully appreciate this wine's density, acidity, mouth feel, we encourage it to be served at a proper temperature of 52-56 degrees.* It also gains complexity with exposure to oxygen, feel free to decant it, or enjoy over several days.

### **Technical Notes**

- Varietals: 50% Roussanne, 35% Marsanne, 10% Viognier, 5% Grenache Blanc
- Vineyard: Saralee's Vineyard, Russian River Valley
- Harvest Dates: 10/21/2012 & 9/15/12
- Brix at harvest: 23, 24, 21.5, 23
- pH 3.5, T.A. 0.6 g/100mL
- Alcohol 13.7%
- Fermentation: Neutral oak barrel, Native yeast and Malolactic
- Aging: 6-8 months in neutral oak, 4 months on lees
- Case Production: 105 Cases
- Suggested Retail: \$28
- Winemaker: William Allen



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