

Reaper

PASO ROBLES / CABERNET

Andrew Murray came on board as the Central Coast winemaker for Reaper with the 2013 vintage. Andrew and his team handled all aspects of the wine: from vineyard management, to blending, to bottling. As much as anyone we have ever known, Andrew is a 'non-interventionist' winemaker. He believes fundamentally that great wine starts with great vineyards. Andrew says it is the winemaker's job to take what nature has given us and carefully blend the component parts to make the most successful wine.

Andrew's Notes on the 2013 Paso Robles Cabernet:

Brave Oak Vineyard was planted in the year 2000 and is farmed by Tony Domingos. We previously leased about 10 acres of his vineyard for the growing of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre. We let our lease go, but we have stayed close with Tony through the years and begged him for some of his Cabernet from the 2013 vintage. Cabernet has become one of the more dear grapes down here in the Central Coast and in particular on the east side of Paso Robles. It yields a ripe and rich Cabernet Sauvignon that has some of the Bordeaux-like elements of tobacco, cigar box, leather and dust, without ever any of the green or unripe notes that Cabernet can suffer from. Lots of ripe flavors of blueberry, blackberry, cassis, vanilla, and a graphite/pencil shavings quality that I greatly admire.

Curtis Estate is our home vineyard, just above the winery, and we grow incredible Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. When assembling the final blend, it became apparent that the single variety, single vineyard wine from Paso was wonderful but lacking something...blending trials revealed that a small amount of a special wine that I had made as a co-ferment of PV and CF, rounded the wine out and completed both the aromatic profile and the mouthfeel.

- **Vintage: 2013**
- **Total Production: 304 cases**
- **Location: Paso Robles, California**
- **Vineyard: Brave Oak & Curtis Vineyard**
- **Encepagement: 93% Cabernet, 5% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc**
- **Alcohol: 14.5%**

Elevage of the wine: All lots hand picked in the cold of the night, and fermented in small open top tanks separately. The Cabernet benefited from an extra hand sorting over our sorting table, which removed shot (unripe) berries, raisins, and any stems or portions of stems (jacks), which helping to avoid any green or unripe flavors in the wine. All wines were on skins from 12-20 days. The Cabernet was pumped over 2-3 times per day to extract a dark and rich Cabernet while helping to round out the tannins.

The wine was subsequently aged in a mix of new and 1-3 year old French Oak barrels for 12 months prior to bottling, unfined.

Tasting Notes:

Everything about this wine is fully extractive and powerful. The nearly opaque, blue-black core stretches almost all the way to the edge of the wine, revealing a modest water band. The tremendous viscosity of the wine shows in the thick sheets of tearing slowing pouring down the sides of the glass.

The nose is so powerful that aromas of tobacco, chocolate-cherry and bitter cocoa are evident as the wine pours from the bottle into the glass. Closer inspection reveals additional aromas of *kirschwasser*, cherry-flavored-tobacco, lead and cedar shavings. Strikingly there is virtually no alcoholic burn evident in the nose.

On the palate the wine offers a bright attack featuring silky tannins and great mid-palate depth, along with surprising weight in a wine so young. The wine offers a long tobacco-laced finish, showing vanilla and cedar with a black plum core.

