

2009 Vin Gris (Dry Rosé)

History

We admit it. We love Vin Gris. Maybe it's the wonderful strawberry-red color, maybe it's the refreshing fruit flavors, and maybe it's the crisp acidity. It's the kind of wine that you can just pop open and enjoy for the simple beauty of the flavors, as an aperitif, or with a light meal.

This is the third vintage of Vin Gris we've made at Dashe. The 2009 bottling is similar to last year's Vin Gris: an extremely drinkable, balanced rosé with a long finish. The color is beautiful, and the wine goes down very, very easily. Where it differs from the 2008 is in its composition. It increases the amount of Grenache in the blend (50%), and blends in 30% Petite Sirah and 20% Zinfandel from our top blocks of Dry Creek Valley fruit, for added complexity and balance.

We feel that the Grenache makes all the difference. It adds a texture and mouthfeel that is perfect for this kind of wine—rich enough to make for a complex rosé, but light enough to support the delicacy of the wine. We finished our Vin Gris like a classic European rosé, mostly dry, with hints of strawberry and raspberry fruit, a crisp structure, and a long, fruit-driven finish.

Production

To make this Vin Gris we “bled off” juice from tanks of Grenache, Petite Sirah and top Zinfandel lots. This technique—used in France for generations—allows us to concentrate the flavors in certain lots by reducing the amount of juice in contact with the skins. We waited about ten hours to allow the juice to pick up just enough color, and then bled the tanks through a stainless steel screen.

As is our tradition with all of our Dashe wines, we used the native yeasts on the grapes to conduct the fermentation. Timing is everything in a rosé—we need to have the juice in contact with the skins long enough to pick up a lovely color and attractive flavors, but not so long as to pick up unwanted tannins that can create harshness, or a rough finish.

We kept the fermentation temperature moderate, in the 65-degree range. This longish fermentation preserved the naturally lovely fruit aromatics, while helping to develop lush, complex flavors in the finished wine. To highlight the varietals' delicate fruit and accentuate the wine's long, crisp, clean finish, it was allowed to finish fermentation naturally—it stopped just as it reached dryness. After fermentation, it was kept in its stainless steel tank, filtered to remove the yeast and particulate matter, and bottled in December to ensure fresh fruit flavors.

Tasting Notes

Color: Strawberry-red.

Aroma: Beautiful deep wild strawberry, raspberry, and cherry mixed with mineral and spice.

Flavors: Beautiful mineral and strawberry fruit on entry, along with raspberry and dried cherry notes. Rich, balanced, mouth-filling texture. Long, sweet, luscious finish. Perfect when slightly chilled.

Number of cases produced: 97 cases (750 ml)
Date released: April 2, 2010
Price: \$14 suggested retail