



2010 Counoise
Ciel du Cheval Vineyard
Red Mountain

Composition:	100% Counoise
Vineyard:	Ciel du Cheval
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	3.3
Titrateable Acid:	7.6 g/l
Harvest:	October 21, 2010
Bottling:	April 8, 2013 98 cases
Release:	February, 2015

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Generally known as a blending or rosé grape, Counoise (“coon-WAHZ”) is rarely bottled by itself as a red wine. The cuttings are Beaucastel material sourced from Tablas Creek Nursery, planted for us in 1999 by Jim Holmes at his renowned Ciel du Cheval Vineyard on Red Mountain. We initially acquired these grapes for our southern-Rhône style blend (“Sirocco”), but we are so enchanted by the Counoise that we like to bottle a small amount varietally. We normally blend in some Syrah to balance the mid-palate. However this year we stayed with the pure intensity of this dazzling, high-acid grape.

Counoise is renowned for its brightness, light tannins and powerful red fruit fragrance and flavors. Deep and intense, the 2010 exemplifies this “in spades.” In fact, this wine is drinking very “young” at release, despite more than 2 years in barrel (approximately 18% new) and an additional 2 years in bottle. We normally don’t suggest decanting but this wine can benefit from the oxygen exposure, at least if opened in the next several years. Perhaps more than any vintage we’ve bottled, the 2010 exhibits a genuine explosion of earthy, bright aromas. Its acidity lends a long finish and guarantees a good fit with foods. It will be great with grilled salmon, duck, or any foods where you might want a Pinot Noir. The high acidity will ensure a very long cellaring potential.

Previously it was said that 2008 was one of the coolest growing seasons, but the 2010 vintage easily surpassed anything to date in the history of McCrea Cellars. Bud break was pretty typical, but then followed by an unusually cool spring accompanied by rain as well. This resulted in late flowering coupled with an inconsistent fruit set due to the moisture. Since this fruit came from Ciel du Cheval on Red Mountain it proved to be a great asset. Despite that very hot site, Counoise was very late.

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