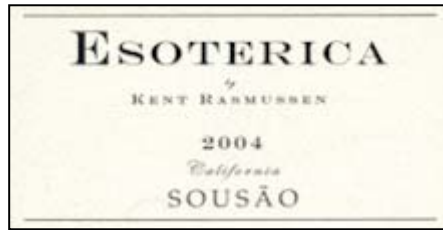


Esoterica



Sousao 2004

California

Vineyard Source: Watt Vineyard, Lodi

Chemistry at harvest: Brix: 23.7% sugar pH 3.79 Total Acidity: 4.5 grams/liter

Quantity Produced: 118 cases (12 x 750ml)

Date of Bottling: November 21, 2005

Barrels: 12 months in one year old French oak

Chemistry at bottling: pH: 3.90 Total Acidity 6.0 grams/liter Alcohol: 13.84%
Free Sulfur Dioxide: 25 ppm Total Sulfur Dioxide: 64 ppm

Sousão is one of the minor varieties used in the making of Port. Many winemakers think that it is quite a wonderful grape, although it is often described in wine literature as "rustic"-whatever that means! In the Douro, Sousão is used to add a hint of very opulent fruit to Port blends, but it adds little in the way of structure or finesse.

Over the years I have had several wines made from California's miniscule plantings of the Sousão grape. Each time I have had one I was impressed-perhaps Sousão grows better here than in its native Portugal, although honestly, at this point, there is so little planted that it would be hard to make much of a judgment.

This wine is a great example of what sort of wine the grape can make. It is medium bodied, with a highly structured mouth, but with a somewhat simpler nose. The predominant sensory notes are odd for vinifera, but very appealing; musky, mulberry-like and slightly foxy-very different, but quite nice. To me, this Sousão is a wine that would drink nicely on its own, but would go well with the same sort of cuisine that you might choose to go with Syrah or Tempranillo.