

Topel Winery

2003 Meritage

TOPEL

WINERY:

If you head North on California's Highway 101 after entering Mendocino County, eventually the road narrows to a two lane road. You are close to Hopland and to your left are some delightful hills that used to be an artists colony, but now have the Topel vineyards and winery hidden there at the end of two miles of dirt road. The first grapes were planted in 1989. At 1400 feet and with ideal soil structure for grape growing, high diurnal temperature swings, this a perfect and unique place to grow grapes. Mark and Donnis Topel have their home in the middle of the vineyards. Mark's legal background is an unlikely start for a wine business, Donnis' dancing and culinary background on slightly less so. Their wines however, demonstrate their fast developing viticultural and winemaking skills.

WINEMAKING:

The grapes are field-crushed about 15 minutes after they are picked. To further protect freshness, the picking takes place at night, when temperatures drop to around 50-60 degrees. The crushed grapes go right into small, open-top vessels, where they undergo a natural cold soak of about 4 days, until temperatures rise naturally to allow a wholly indigenous yeast fermentation that lasts about 12 days. The must is punched down by hand 4 times a day, and is not permitted to macerate after fermentation, in order to control tannin and preserve fruit. After pressing, the wine goes immediately into French barrels, where it spends 22 to 30 months, with only minimal racking, 3 to 4 times during that whole period. The wine is bottled unfiltered.

SOURCE:

100% Estate fruit. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Cabernet Franc, 12% Petit Verdot, and 12% Merlot

AGING

60% new French oak barrels. (Used once for 1-2 months aging of Chardonnay)

PRODUCTION:

730 cases

ALCOHOL:

14.2% by volume

Arizona Distribution by

Orangewood Wines

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