

# **Frenchtown Farms 'Cotillion' 2018**

**Producer** - Aaron and Cara Mockrish

**Provenance:** Sierra Foothills, California

**Farming:** Organic, dry-farmed

**Grape(s):** 70% Mourvedre, 20% Grenache from David Girard's organic vineyard in the Sierra Foothills. 10% Syrah they grow themselves at Renaissance.

**Vineyard(s):** David Girard Vineyards in El Dorado county. Decomposed igneous rock, organic (in conversion). The Syrah comes from the dry, granitic soils at Renaissance.

**Fermentation/ Aging:** Grenache is picked first, fermented whole cluster for about a

week. Whole clusters of Mourvedre added right on top with the Syrah. Pressed after 8 days into flextank to finish fermentation before barreling down. Aged in 228L Bordeaux barrels

**Fining/ Filtration:** none.

**Sulfur:** 18 ppm at bottling

**Misc:** 'Cotillion' is apparently some odd East Coast high society tradition of formal dances. More importantly, this wine functions as their experimental wine so each vintage will be a new exploration.



## **The Producer:**

Emboldened by a formative stint at Big Table Farm in Oregon, east coasters Aaron and Cara Mockrish moved to North Yuba, California with a mind to start a farm raising sheep and growing vegetables. That all changed when they encountered a bottle of 2008 Clos Saron 'Black Pearl.' The wine captivated them and upon discovering that Clos Saron was just up the road they set out to make a connection. This evolved into an apprenticeship of sorts that formed the foundation for what is now Frenchtown.

Although Frenchtown began as an ideological successor to the Clos Saron legacy, Cara and Aaron have been through a rigorous process of exploration to find their own voice. Eye opening conversations with luminaries like Batiste Overnoy, Pascaline Lepeltier and Nicolas Gordo of Domaine Simon Bize have helped them develop new ideas about how to temper and communicate North Yuba's monumental terroir to produce more youthful wines.

## **The Vineyard**

'Cotillon' is Frenchtown's trial wine used to explore new cellar techniques and vineyards so even though it's the same name and label as the '15 don't be fooled!

In 2017 they decided to test out a relationship with David Girard's organic vineyard on the slopes of Gold Hill in the Sierra Foothills near Coloma. The vines were originally planted in 1998 on decomposed igneous rock at a 1400 foot elevation. The vineyards are midway through the conversion process to organic and are mostly planted with Rhone varieties which is what Aaron and Cara are focusing on in this wine. In particular Aaron mentions some really interesting ideas about under-vine management here.

The Syrah comes from the 40 year old, high elevation vines they farm at the terraced, red granitic soils at Renaissance.

### **The Cellar**

The wine is composed of 70% Mourvedre and 20% Grenache, picked about 4 days apart from each other by David Girard's team. Although the Grenache is ripe half a week earlier the Frenchtown folks feel the ferment is still nascent enough that they can just add the Mourvedre right on top as well as about 10% Syrah they grow at Renaissance for a nice healthy coferment. The 2018 is their second experience with Mourvedre and Grenache and they have changed their approach to a more reductive winemaking style aiming for a more focused personality in the wine. The must is pressed at around 8 days but they now keep it in flextank until the juice is dry to avoid brettanomyces in the finished wine and it is aged entirely in 228L Bordeaux barrels. No stirring, fining or filtration and bottled with 18 ppm sulfite.

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