



2011 Napa Valley Yount Mill Vineyard Flora Vermouth

MATTHIAS  
SON

Flora is a variety bred at UC Davis by the legendary Harold Olmo back in the 50's. It is a cross between Semillon and Gewurtztraminer. Though Olmo isn't with us any more to confirm our theory, our conviction is that he bred it specifically for late harvest dessert wines and fortified wines. The California industry moved away from these types of wines 30 years ago, and Flora fell into obscurity. When we heard that Flora still existed in the organically farmed Yount Mill Vineyard we immediately begged for some fruit. This fruit is a rare exception for us—normally we grow all of our own fruit—but the temptation to make wine from this rare and historical variety was too much to resist.

The wine is 100 percent Flora. The fruit was picked very late, and was raisined and covered with botrytis (noble rot) at harvest. The botrytis was aided by the 2011 fall rains that caused such problems for Cabernet that year, but were perfect for late harvest wines.

The grapes were fermented whole cluster in an open-top fermenter like a red variety. We did manual punch downs once a day. We let the fermentation stop naturally and pressed the wine into partially full used barrels.

We added no sulfites so that the wine would oxidize and develop the wonderful nutty and dried fruit flavors that oxygen can provide. It was barrel aged for 26 months.

To complement the natural grape aromas of the Flora we made infusions of our own blood oranges and sour cherries, along with organic coriander that we purchased, in a base of neutral grape brandy.

The bittering was mainly done by adding an infusion of our own home-grown cardoons, but we also purchased organic chinchona bark, wormwood, and blessed thistle to infuse for a little more complexity.

The wine was bottled unfiltered. 160 cases of half bottles.