



2010 Napa Valley Flora

N
O
S
S
A
I
H
I
A
S
S
O
N
M
A
T
T
H
I
A
S
S
O
N

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 wine. The California industry moved away from dessert wines 30 years ago, and Flora fell into obscurity. When we heard that a vineyard block planted to Flora still existed we immediately begged for some fruit.

The wine is 100 percent Flora. The fruit was picked very late, and were raisined and covered with botrytis at harvest. The botrytis was aided by the 2010 fall rains that caused such problems for Cabernet.

The grapes were destemmed and crushed, and fermented on the skins 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 two partially full used barrels. We added no SO₂ at that point so that the wine would oxidize and develop the wonderful nutty and dried fruit flavors that oxygen can provide.

After nine months of barrel aging, the wine was bottled unfiltered. The pH is 3.49, the TA is 6.3, RS is 12.1%, and the alcohol is 14.8%. 75 cases of half bottles were made.

The Flora is copper colored, and redolent of toasted almonds, dried apricots, and candied orange peels. It's just moderately sweet, and gains its rich full mouthfeel by the tannin from the skin fermentation and the natural acidity, as well as the oily botrytis character that lingers for ages.

The Vineyard

The Flora block represents four rows of vines in the Yount Mill Vineyard in Yountville. They are scarcely profitable for the Hoxey's, the owners of the vineyard. They maintain the vines as a homage to the great California tradition of viticulture.