



## 2009 Napa Valley Refosco dal Penduncula Rosso

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Refosco dal Penduncula Rosso originates in the Friuli region of Italy and Slovenia. While most Refosco in the U.S. is misnamed, and is actually Mondeuse noire, true Refosco dal Penduncula Rosso budwood was imported from Italy and officially released in the late 90s. We have the only planting we know of in Northern California. An ancient grape, Refosco was praised for its quality by Pliny the Elder in the first century. We feel that it is the perfect red counterpoint to Ribolla gialla.

The wine is 100 percent Refosco dal Penduncula Rosso. 2009 was our first crop (we grafted the budwood onto mature Merlot vines in 2008). To achieve concentration and enable an early pick we thinned off more than half the fruit. That, plus dry-farming, helped the vines get fully ripe at only 21.5 brix, preserving the fresh fruit and mineral character that is so seductive about Refosco. In 2010 we lost all but 100 lbs of the crop to the sudden heat spell in August, so we gleaned that small amount and combined it with the 2009 wine.

The grapes were destemmed and crushed both years, and fermented on the skins at very cool temps in an open-top fermenter (in an open barrel in 2010). We did manual punch downs twice a day. We pressed just before dryness, and aged the 2009 wine in a neutral barrel for 20 months, and the 2010 wine in a stainless steel keg for 8 months.

The pH is 3.86, and the alcohol is 12.4%. 30 cases were made.

The Refosco has a huge nose of almonds, tropical fruit, and smashed berries. The flavors continue with marzipan, berries, and a stony minerality that is incredibly distinctive. The tannins and concentration are very strong, but the moderate alcohol keep the palate lively and clean.

The Vineyard

The Refosco represents 3 rows in our home vineyard in the Western Oak Knoll area of Napa Valley. It was grafted onto 15 year old Merlot vines. Organically managed and dry-farmed, with fruit trees at the ends of the rows, the vines are serenaded throughout the season by kids, coyotes, owls, bees, and the occasional roar of one of our old tractors.