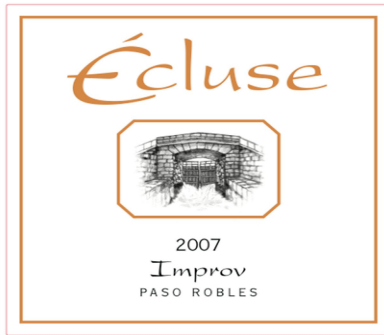


2007 ÉCLUSE IMPROV



330 Cases produced
14.8 Alcohol
3.8 pH
7.8 g/l Titratable Acidity
Unfiltered / Unfined

Improv, a new offering from Écluse wines in 2009, is a blend of Syrah and Zinfandel sourced from Lock Vineyard, our small family owned 30 acre vineyard located in the prized hills of the Westside Paso Robles AVA. This blend brings together the brighter berry fruit and pepper of the Zinfandel and the darker fruit, spice and smoke of the Syrah.

The vines in both the Zinfandel and Syrah blocks were planted in 1998 and are producing mature fruit with excellent flavor profiles. The vineyard is farmed sustainably with most viticultural operations performed by hand. The Zinfandel block is on a bilateral cordon VSP system, is two budded during pruning in late winter, shoot thinned in the spring and hand harvested in the fall. Mechanical tillage is used for weed control. Water used in the winery is stored, converted to compost tea and utilized in our spray program for control of powdery mildew and as the carrier for foliar additions of micro nutrients. The Syrah vines are on a split trellis system to control vigor and receive the same viticulture protocol.

We began checking the Brix in early September. Once we reached a level of 24 Brix we began taking random berry samples looking for the flavor profiles we wanted and made our harvest decisions on that basis. Because of the variable terrain in our vineyard we picked the fruit over a period of several weeks, beginning on the hill tops and working toward the bottoms while alternating the two sides of the rows.

Fermentation was done in small open topped bins ranging in size of harvest of from one ton to one and a half tons of fruit. The fruit was de-stemmed and cold soaked for a period of 4 days. All of this fruit was inoculated with a commercial yeast and fermentation was completed over a period of 10 days. During the fermentation process the bins were punched down 4 to 6 times daily to help control the heat and to extract the maximum color from the skins. Fermentation was completed in 12 days with total dryness of a reading of -2 on the hydrometer. After completion of fermentation the free run wine was moved by gravity from the bins to the barrels. The remainder was pressed off in a four hectoliter basket press and barreled. Our Rhone program utilizes 30 to 40% new oak, 30% year old oak and the remainder neutral oak. The barrels are sourced from Hungary and France.

The blending trials took place in June and the wines were tank blended and returned to barrel after two days. We feel that we get much better integration when the blends are in the barrel for an extended period of time, in this case ten months.

The wine was bottled in early April 2009 and released October 2009.

Steve Lock
Winemaker