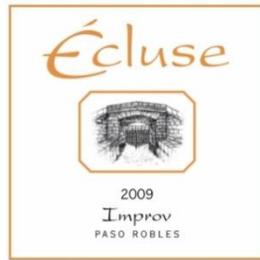


# 2009 Écluse “Improv” Lock Vineyard

54% Syrah – 41% Zinfandel



## 2009 Écluse “Improv” Lock Vineyard

**250 Cases Produced**

**15.8 Alcohol**

**4.16 pH**

**0.63 g/100mL Titratable Acidity**

**Unfiltered/Unfined**

Our 2009 Écluse Estate Improv was mainly sourced from Lock Vineyard, our small family owned 30 acre property located in the prized hills of the Westside Paso Robles AVA. The Syrah and Zinfandel are planted on the north facing portion of the vineyard with a high content of shale and limestone soils. The proximity of the vineyard to the Templeton Gap gives us an ideal climate for our fruit with hot days but cool, sometimes foggy nights and mornings. The vineyard is sustainably farmed and the bulk of the work is accomplished by hand. From the pruning in February, spring shoot thinning and the harvest in the fall, we are in the vineyard daily monitoring the development of the fruit. With this approach we are able to better assess the relationship of the canopy to the fruit load, the amount of sun exposure on both sides of the canopy and insure that the growing environment in the block of fruit is as ideal as possible. This hands-on approach to farming enables us to focus on harvesting grapes that exhibit the intense varietal characteristics of our Syrah and Zinfandel.

The 2009 growing season was yet another dry year with rainfall at Lock Vineyard of just over 7 inches. With typical growing season temperatures (except with a cooler August), our harvest started right on time in late September and early October. We harvested each varietal over several weeks, separating to some degree the slope and canopy exposure. By harvesting the fruit in small quantities over an extended period of time, we were able to select the fruit when the flavor profiles were where we wanted them as certain blocks received extended hang time.

We used small open top fermentation bins which are designed for either one ton or one-and-a-half tons of fruit. Sorting on the inbound conveyor to cull anything not desirable for the final wine, the fruit is de-stemmed, looking for whole berries, and sorted again on an outbound table to remove jack stems that pass through the de-stemmer. The fruit was then cold-soaked in the barrel room at 60 degrees for several days. We inoculated with commercial yeast strains and fermentation was completed after eleven to fourteen days.

The free run and press wine were combined in a settling tank two days prior to barrel down. Our barrel program consists of one-third new barrels, one-third once used barrels and one third neutral barrels, with a focus on American and Hungarian oak for our Zin program. Every barrel was individually evaluated during our blending trials to find the perfect blend for this wine. The blend was racked from barrel at assembly in August 2010 and again two weeks prior to bottling. We feel that this early blending results in a more integrated, approachable and mature wine on release that will only improve with age. Following our minimalistic approach to winemaking, our wines are unfiltered and unfined. Due to this, extended bottle aging will develop sediment in the bottle over time. Decanting is recommended in 2014 and beyond. This wine was in the barrel for eighteen months and was bottled in mid May of 2011.

This improvised blend is loaded with aromas of plums, earth, lavender, smoke and cedar with a fully plush mid-mouth feel leading to a well-balanced tannin and acid finish. This exceptionally food friendly wine is rich, bold and velvety smooth wine on release and will only improve with age.

*Savor the Wine That is Truly Écluse!*

Steve Lock  
Winemaker & Proprietor