

2018 SKYLARK LAS AVES

Winemakers: John Lancaster & Robert Perkins

36% Syrah 26% Cabernet Sauvignon 18% Carignane 11% Petite Sirah 9% Grenache

Alc 14.7%

pH 3.65

Ta 6.4 g/l

Vineyards: Ashurst, Neal, Niemi & Sawyer

Appellation: North Coast

Production: 12 barrels – 300 cases produced

Available in .750ml bottles and 5gl kegs

Tasting notes:

Ruby red. Chocolate-covered Morello cherry with, plum, cassis and savory herbs. The palate is dense and polished, with the textured fruits in seamless integration with the natural acidity. A chocolatey ripeness develops with aeration in the glass though nicely buffered by the fine-grained tannins. The balanced fruit profile and admirable structure suggest this vintage can be successfully cellared for at least 10 years.

Aging potential:

Best from 2021 to 2031

In the vineyard:

Las Aves is our continued exploration of Rhone varietals married with Cabernet Sauvignon as done brilliantly in the Priorat region of Spain. Our Niemi Vineyard Carignane, planted in the 1950s, works beautifully with Cabernet Sauvignon, lending an earth and structure component to the ripe fruit profile of the Cabernet. The blend is made complete by the floral character of Sawyer Vineyard Grenache and the density and midpalate of Ashurst Vineyard Syrah. The 2018 version of Las Aves also has a small dollop of Petite Sirah from Charlie Sawyer's Mendocino site. Adjacent to the Grenache we harvest from Charlie, the Petite Sirah was so glorious in 2018 we were fortunate to make this small addition.

About the harvest:

2018 got off to a slow start with a late and cool spring across the North Coast. Summer was a warm and temperate textbook season for grape-growing. Full crop loads enjoyed an elongated growing season with harvest accomplished under sunny skies with no real September heat spikes. Red grape harvest for Las Aves started with Ashurst Syrah on October 3 and finished with Niemi Carignane on October 18. As a harvest, 2018 will be remembered for its moderate temperatures, later harvest dates and exceptional quality.

In the cellar:

Each lot was passed down the sorting table before being crushed into the fermenter. While Carignane and Cabernet are destemmed, we retained 10% stems in the Sawyer Grenache and 30% stems in the Ashurst Syrah. Grenache and Cabernet were both fermented in open top tanks, where we punch down twice daily. Syrah and Carignane in stainless tanks were pumped over twice daily until dry. All red wine ferments are with indigenous yeast at their own pace. After primary fermentation, each lot was separately barreled to seasoned French cooperage. After secondary fermentation is complete, a barrel selection is made, racked to a tank, and then returned to barrel for the final months of élevage.