

2012 CONTRA

CALIFORNIA RED WINE

CONTRA is a wine that reflects the opposite of modern wine sensibilities—of wines over-worked and amped up, pushed and prodded into Procrustean palate-numbing sameness. A *rebours*, this wine is a contrarian blend of perhaps the most old-fangled grape variety, carignane, from several extremely old (100 year+), non-grafted, dry-farmed head-trained vineyards, located in Contra Costa County, and the *puer aeternus* syrah, young, vibrant, racy and peppery. Contra is a somewhat contradictory flashback/forward to the straightforward, frank wines of yester- and future-year. A field blend that contravenes contraindicated convention, with aromas of black cherry and licorice, flavorful cassis, blackberries and silky tannins. A wine (hardly) contraindicated for gastronomy, it is above all, contrapuntal.

TASTING NOTES

Carignane does not produce a wine that you would serve the queen, whom, we trust has minimal interest in #countrymatters. There is just an unregenerate degree of rusticity to this wine (coupled mercifully with a fragrant, perfumed sweetness), a sort of earthiness, sweatiness, the hayride of one's early to mid-adolescence, undertaken with the blossoming figure of one's febrile fantasy. Ahem. These carignane vines are old, with roots that descend eighty or ninety feet into the water table, extracting minerals all the way down; the dominant aroma is raw (or perhaps gently smoked) meat, though with a bit of a swirl, slightly more complexity emerges—licorice, flowers, sage and savory (in both senses of the word). The palate is lush and rich, a very complete mouthful of wine.

WINEMAKING NOTES

Dedicated to producing wines in a more unaffected, hands-off style, with a particular emphasis on the expression of *terroir*, or unique sense of place, Bonny Doon Vineyard fashioned the 2012 Contra from hand harvested grapes from the northernmost reaches of the Central Coast—old vines from Contra Costa County's Gonsalves Vineyard and its more Southern climes, San Luis Obispo's Alamo Creek vineyard and Santa Maria Valley's famed Bien Nacido Vineyard. Hand sorted, indigenous yeast fermented in individual lots, extended maceration and 100% ML, before blending to achieve to a wine that is bursting with life, exuberance and deep vitality.



VITAL STATS

VARIETAL COMPOSITION: 56% carignane, 17% syrah, 15% grenache, 11% mourvèdre, 1% cinsault

APPELLATION: California

VINEYARDS: 69% Gonsalves, 25% Alamo Creek, 6% Bien Nacido

ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 13.7%

TA: 5.4 g/L

pH: 3.58

PRODUCTION: 4,091 cases

REGION



WINEMAKER

RANDALL GRAHM



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