



Proof Petite Sirah 2016

The gasp of surprise and exclamation of “there it is again!” returned to me in an instant. It was only a moment, but I recalled Darrell Corti, the famous wine importer, showing old French harvest photos to Roger Boulton, the great wine professor. They were excited about something that I found odd. White grapes were in the bins of red grapes. And this wasn’t by accident....

During The Gold Rush, Petite Sirah (AKA “Durif”), Alicante Bouchet and the ultra-rare Sauvignonasse, left the warm south of France for sunny California. Opportunity beckoned! California’s lackluster wines were being made from table grapes. These new wines made from *wine* grapes caused a sensation. Two of these varieties are red, and the third is white. And yet here they are, mixed up together in these old vineyards....

It seems that the vintners of the time appreciated some perfume, some lifted aromas in their wines. So when I saw the bright golden clusters of Sauvignonasse along side the Alicante Bouchet, the memory clicked. Daryl and Roger’s conversation gained immediacy in my mind. We were going to recreate the past, before these vineyards disappeared.

A blend of Petite Sirah (95%) with 2% Alicante Bouchet (whole cluster) and 3% Sauvignonasse (whole cluster) is akin to discovering a time capsule from the late 19th century. What was wine like then?

We recreated the method of winemaking to get an idea. The 2016 vintage provides a refined expression of these rustic grapes. Wild and spring like, the aromas of blueberries and violets are lovely. Bright acidity and fine grained tannins make this an ideal wine for hearty meals. Proof Petite Sirah is a jubilant expression of blackberry and dark Damson plum that is really a joy to taste and share.