



2010 Aratas "Shake Ridge Ranch" Petite Sirah

Aratas Amador Petite Sirah is grown on the high ridglands of the Sierra Foothills. Planted to vine in 2003, just two small lots produce a coveted amount of Petite Sirah for grower, Ann Kraemer. At 1650'-1800' elevation, the unforgiving terrain has dramatic slope ranging from 10-28% grade. This area of the gold country sees as much as 35" of rain during the harsh dormant season but the granitic soils (quartz, granite and volcanic in nature) and severe slope sheds much of it away so the roots dive deep to capture what they can. This elevation means the vineyard experiences as much as a 50 degree diurnal temperature swing. To protect from dangerous frost, cropping and vineyard management is extremely laborious. The vines are pruned later in the season than typical scrutinized vine by vine after multiple passes then hedged just at the precipice of bud break. Sunburn sneaks up on you here. "The ranch" resembles a patchwork quilt with each small lot positioned to maximize every swale, dip and contour of the ridgeline. The small berry Petite is oriented NE – SW to safely protect against burn. Timing is crucial for development so no fruit sees the ground until July allowing the plants as much time as possible to invest their best effort in the excessively low yields as only the most evenly formed clusters will make the first round of cuts. Come harvest, as the morning temps rapidly rise so do the sugars therefore at *Shake Ridge Ranch* harvest is performed only at night by the light of headlamps and the harvest moon.

"Though Petite is a wine suited for cruising rather than quick acceleration, this wine is lush and voluptuous upon release. The tannins are well behaved but certainly present and step right up when paired with marbled cuts or roasted meats that call for a big red. Fruit dominant in nature, the compounds attributing to the juicy aromas flavors blackberry, plum chutney and acai berry are vibrant but masculine upon release. The volcanic soils of the Sierras do imply some hint of bing cherry and boysenberry pie, essence of red fruit not always evident in Petite Sirah. We are fond of using Hungarian Oak barrels and although they are sourced not far from John's family summer home in the Balaton region of Hungary, Winemaker Mike Drash is partial to the exotic spice seasoning the toasted staves impart in our wine so enjoy the wave of holiday nostalgia that resonates at first sip. Trust International cultivates it's vineyards in Szigetvar Hungary but we love that it is an American owned, environmentally sensitive company and that the wood is selectively harvested rather than clear cut. This Petite is our first release from the "Shake Ridge Ranch" vineyard and we are pleased that it represents another dimension of the American Heritage Varietal in our portfolio dedicated to California Petite Sirah." Stephanie Douglas, Vintner

Winemaker, Mike Drash

100% Petite Sirah Root stock 101-14 / Clone PFS3 / Lots G & B-Lower

7 day cold soak followed by 22 mos in 100% New Trust Hungarian Oak, bottled unfiltered and unfined

\$58 (750ml) 15.1% Alc/Vol In 2010, we harvested less than a ton of fruit to produce 41 cases of wine.