



## 2017 Aratas “Shake Ridge Ranch” Petite Sirah

Aratas Shake Ridge Ranch Petite Sirah is grown on the high ridge lands of the Sierra Foothills. Amador county is known for its hot dry climate and notable zinfandels but our grower’s spectacular ranch is planted to vine at elevations starting at 1650’ and climbing rapidly to over 1800’ feet above sea level. Just two small lots produce a coveted amount of Petite Sirah. Both were obtained through the UC Davis Foundation services by renowned grower, Ann Kraemer and noted for their exceptional clone true to the varietal. At this elevation, the vineyard experience as much as a 50 degree diurnal temperature swing which intensifies the sugars in the fruit then drives the acid when temps drop precipitously fast after sunset.

Vineyard management is extremely laborious. In late spring this vintage the four year drought was declared over, for the time being. The winter brought much needed rain, torrential flooding occurred in low lying areas. The unforgiving terrain has dramatic slope ranging 10-28% which sheds rain fall so the roots must dive deep to capture what they can thus each tiny berry produced hangs rich and concentrated in flavor. As is typical for Ann’s vineyard management style, each row is scrutinized vine by vine then then pruned just at the precipice of bud break. In 2017 it came later than usual and given the heavy rains the final yield was extremely light.

The small berry Petite is oriented NE – SW to safely protect against burn yet maximizes exposure to ripening rays. Crucial for development, first drop took place in July allowing the plants as much time as possible to invest their best effort in the low yields as only the most evenly formed clusters will make the cut. The granitic soils of the Sierras are harsh so just before veraison, when the fruit begins to develop the phenols that create its complex aromatics, the vines are fed organic nutrients made from fish emulsion, chicken feathers and other stinky but healthy things. Veraison lagged until the first week of August but development caught up as a week of above average temps nudged them along. Harvest began before sunrise on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Hand harvest on Shake Ridge Ranch is performed *only at night*, typically just hours before sunrise by the light of headlamps when temps are cool and acid levels are at optimal levels.

Tasting impressions: Rich and structured, this wine has expressive aromas of current, blackberry, Aleppo and black pepper., braised pork and a hint of aromatic sweetness of roast duckling and cigar box. The juicy nature on the palate is reminiscent of a baked rhubarb pie and sun ripened raspberries plucked from the vine in the heat of summer. Subtle spice notes of cardamom, red licorice and sandalwood linger on the finish.

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

Precision Selectiv’Optical Sort, 5 day cold soak, aged 30 mos in 50% New Trust Hungarian Oak, 18 months bottle aged

Bottled unfiltered and unfined on native yeasts.

Harvest date October 9, 2017 14.5% Alc./Vol.

Winemaker: Matt Sunseri Grower: Ann Kraemer