

2008 Ascendance

Source: Happy Valley Vineyards and Gold Hill Vineyard, El Dorado County

Harvest Date: October, 2008

Brix at Harvest: 25.5 to 26

Time in Barrel: 18 months

Type of Oak: Neutral French & American

Alcohol: 15.9%

Bottled: April 2009

Production: 115 cases

Winemaker's Notes: This wine is fashioned along the lines of a Super Tuscan and features 85% Sangiovese and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon.

Our 2008 Ascendance features a Sangio-driven bright fruit finish with lively acidity. This element is tamed by the base notes and power of Cabernet Sauvignon. This style of blend was initiated by Italian winemakers who were told by their government that if they added Cab to Saniovese, they couldn't label their wine as Chianti. So they named it Super Tuscan and created a whole new and exciting type of wine for the world state. We tell our tasting room customers that it takes several months of drunken and passionate arguing to get the blends right!

Growing at altitudes of 1,200 and 2,100 feet, all these vines have a mid to late ripening cycle. After hard-harvesting and crushing, the grapes were fermented over a 14-day period in open-top containers. The must was punched down by hand three times a day to extract maximum color and varietal character. The wine was pressed in a small manually operated vertical basket press. After settling the wine was aged in neutral French and American oak barrels to let as much varietal character show through as possible. The wine was racked by gravity flow only and was bottled unfined and unfiltered.

Due to unanticipated demand, we will be making this blend going forward and calling it Campione, meaning Champion in Italian.