



# IDLEWILD

## *Wines*

### *2016 Barbera, Fox Hill Vineyard*

#### *Vineyard*

Fox Hill Vineyard is without a doubt one of the most unique vineyards in Northern California. One of its true beauties is that it has remained relatively unknown. Located southeast of Ukiah on Mendocino's Talmage Bench, the soils are well drained with high concentrations of gravel and sandstone, and the farming is as old fashioned and straight forward as it gets. What makes this site so unique though is the fact that Lowell Stone decided to follow his passion, to buck every market trend, and to simply plant what he was interested in planting. Many trips to Italy turned to inspiration and the wild spectrum of varieties began to take root. The cooler tree sheltered and northwest facing blocks are appropriately planted with varietals that originate in Italy's Piemonte. Barbera has two sides: 1- light, simple, ubiquitous, and planted all over; 2- fresh, dense, purposeful, and planted in special spots. This little block at Fox Hill is the latter and produces small clusters of intense flavor while retaining amazing balance and acidity.

#### *Vintage*

After 2015, the 2016 vintage felt like a return to something closer to normal. In all reality, it was still an early and warm season overall, but the timing for the hot spells was quite different than before. The season started in early March, and rolled along fairly normally and moderately through fruit set in late May. And then, the heat came on and we slowly started to catch up to the pace of the previous years. The positive aspect of this cadence is that it allowed us to stay ahead of the weather patterns in the vineyard, which is a favorable vantage point for decision making. Harvest started in late August and took a sudden slow down in mid September due to cooling weather. As such, it became the story of two halves... the first being the early varietals that showed great vibrancy, and the second the later varietals that showed great depth.

#### *Winemaking*

Barbera is all acid and no tannin... literally, there is next to no tannin in the skins. With this in mind, the grapes were fully foot trodden and all stems were included for added spice and structure. The must fermented naturally via native yeast and bacteria. At dryness, the wine was pressed to neutral puncheon where it evolved and integrated for nearly eleven months. Then, a year in bottle completed its aging.

#### *Wine*

While I tend towards lighter and brighter in my reds, Barbera is the exception. With such amazing natural acidity, a deeper and more brooding wine can still find balance. Amarena black cherries, earth, balsamic, violets, quinine, graphite and macerated plums are all balanced by the firm and fresh structure.

294 cases produced.

