

Independent Wine Evaluation

THE SOMMELIER COMPANY

2015 "Chupacabra" GSM Blend, Merkin Vineyards

A sumptuous, fruit-dominated blend, this wine is hard to pin down at first blush. GSM drinkers looking for meat and pepper will find little of that here. Instead, juicy and candied red fruits and subtle mocha recall Grenache's Italian interpretation, Cannonau di Sardegna. Syrah and Mourvedre contribute dark, brambly and medicinal fruit flavors, and complex spices that take some time to fully manifest.

After about an hour, the spice profile rivals the fruit in intensity. Soft cinnamon and clove usher in fragrant anise, rosemary and a touch of white pepper. Brown sugar, cedar mulch and dill express the French oak. Chestnut, orange blossom and lambskin leather soften the character in its spicy phase. Cool eucalyptus enlivens it all.

Complexity: Above average; diverse flavors but not well delineated
Balance: Acid, alcohol and tannins are in balance and well integrated
Intensity: Fruit and spice notes are most expressive, at different times
Character: Exuberant modern-style fruit, done with Old World balance
Typicity: Blind tasting panelists were divided as to its varietal identity; for region, all found it consistent with quality Arizona red table wines.



Appellation: Cochise County, Arizona

Vintage: 2015

Composition: 45% Grenache, 40% Syrah, 15% Mourvedre

Alcohol: 13.5%

Release Price: \$24

VISUAL, AROMATIC AND FLAVOR CHARACTERISTICS:

Appearance: Deep ruby-purple, clear, bright and youthful; no rim variation

Fruit, Floral: Raspberry, pomegranate, blueberry, blackberry, fig, orange blossom

Spice, Herbal, Vegetal: Cinnamon, clove, anise, rosemary, white pepper, eucalyptus

Oak, Earth, Other: Brown sugar, cedar, dill, mocha, chestnut, lambskin leather

RESULTS:

Stage 1: Blind Tasting

- Complexity: 6/10
- Balance: 7/10
- Intensity: 7/10

Stage 2: Non-Blind

- Character: 6/10
- Typicity: 5/10

SCORE: 90

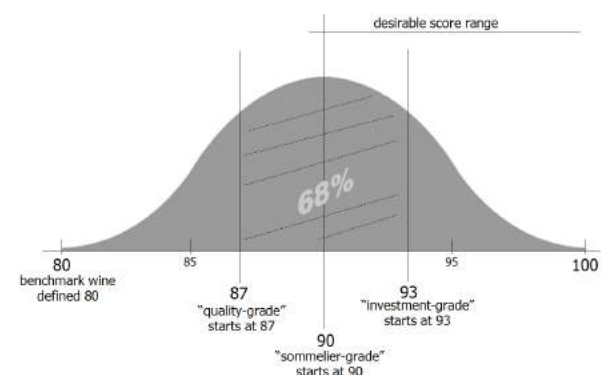


Tasting conducted January 12, 2017

Lead Evaluator, Adam Edmonson, CSW

Principal, Jörn Kleinhans, CSW

EVALUATION MODEL:



METHODOLOGY DISCLOSURE: Full evaluation criteria and process description available upon request. Wines are tasted and evaluated in a controlled environment. Wine samples are provided by producer as part of paid evaluation assignment. Evaluation model assumes that wine quality is normally distributed between scores 80 and 100, where 80 represents a simple, but not flawed, standard wine.