

SWANSON

VINEYARDS

2006 "ARSENE" FORTIFIED PETITE SIRAH

VINEYARD:

The Fair Play AVA (American Viticulture Area) in El Dorado County is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains south of the gold rush town of Placerville, between 2000 and 3000 feet in elevation. In addition to boasting the highest elevation of all viticulture appellations in America, Fair Play is home to excellent soils (decomposed granite), a multitude of exposures and stunning vistas. The area is best known for producing potent and balanced Rhone varieties, like Syrah, Grenache, Viognier and Petite Sirah. With this in mind, we went looking for the perfect Petite Sirah vines for our Salon Arsene program. We found perfection at 2400 feet in a little Fair Play property with exceedingly well-drained soils, slight North-West exposure and vertically trained vines.

WINEMAKER NOTES:

Our 2006 Arsene is a port-style wine, made from grapes harvested at the peak of ripeness, not from late-harvested grapes. The distinction is important, and evident in the fresh fruit aromas and great acid structure. We co-fermented the Petite Sirah with a small amount of Viognier from the Swanson Vineyards Oakville Cross Road Estate and fortified the wine with brandy at a sugar level slightly higher than that of a traditional Port. The wine was then aged for 13 months with about 15% new French oak.

The 2006 Arsene shows deep and focused aromas of mulberry, blueberry and honeysuckle, along with subtle confectionery vanilla and campfire notes. Rich and muscular on the palate, the wine strikes a fine balance between its sweetness and its firm tannin structure. In the spirit of its namesake, this wine is best enjoyed after a long evening of carousing with friends, flirting with your dinner partner, smoking cigars and dancing barefoot in the moonlight.

COMPOSITION:

87% Petite Sirah
13% Viognier

HARVEST:

September 28, 2006

BRIX at HARVEST: 24.7

BRIX at PRESSING: 12.1

ALCOHOL: 17.2%

RESIDUAL SUGAR:

11.8%

BOTTLING:

November 11, 2007

MATURATION:

13 months in oak barrels

15% new French oak

