



2016 Napa Valley Ribolla gialla, Bengier (formerly Vare) Vineyard

Ribolla gialla originates in the Friuli region of Italy and across the border in Slovenia. Its earliest known mention was in the Pope's paperwork managing a dispute between the Bishop of Trieste and a monastery in Venezia in 1296. Back then it would have been skin-fermented like a red wine, and we do that too, but this wine was made in a "modern" method of pressing the fruit and fermenting the juice.

The wine is 100 percent from the Bengier (formerly Vare) Vineyard.

The wine is pure slate and minerals. There is no fruitiness at all, instead there is a sense of clean cold stone. The texture has the tannic structure that Ribolla is known for, and that makes it so great with food. It is the perfect oyster wine, but also great with salads as well as rich pork or chicken dishes.

The fruit was very lightly whole-cluster-pressed and then barrel fermented in completely neutral barrels. It was aged on its lees, with no stirring, until bottling. To preserve all of the acidity the wine was prevented from going through malo-lactic fermentation. After ten months of barrel aging, the wine was filtered to prevent further malolactic fermentation, and then bottled.

The pH is 3.52, the TA is 6.1, and the alcohol is 12.4%. 92 cases produced.

The Vineyard

The Bengier vineyard is in the cool and foggy southern part of the Napa Valley. It sits in the mouth of Napa's Dry Creek canyon, right next to the creek. The rocky fluvial soil and cool air drainage of the canyon work perfectly with the variety. George Vare was given a few sticks of the budwood from Josko Gravner in 2001 and grafted it into his vineyard. Steve started overseeing the vineyard in 2002, helping to further propagate the vines, and falling in love with the variety in the process. George passed away, and the vineyard is now owned by Gary and Cynthia Bengier, who have continued the legacy of Ribolla gialla, the only difference being that the vineyard is now farmed organically. Steve still oversees it. Arnot Roberts, Ryme, Grassi, and Massican all purchase fruit from the Bengier Vineyard.