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Adelaida Keeper , Paso Robles Rhone Blend, 2009

**Normally \$36 a bottle,
Bacchus & Venus Wine Club Re-order Price \$29**



I thought that I was lost on a recent visit to Paso Robles when I found, sitting on a 600-acre walnut orchard, picturesque Adelaida Winery in the Adelaide Hills. **Adelaida's sustainably certified estate vineyards yield Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, and those full-bodied, spicy, Rhône grape varietals.** After driving down curvy hillside roads and without another building in sight for miles, Adelaida Winery was a welcome and delicious reward.

It all started in 1970 for Adelaida Winery, when the Van Steenwyk family purchased a hilltop ranch along Adelaida Road. At the time, they had no intention of becoming winery owners. Ten years later, during the early 1980s, a winemaker named John Munch began hand-crafting stunning Cabernet and Chardonnay under the Adelaida Cellars label. By the end of this decade, the Van Steenwyks had partnered with John Munch to create Adelaida's signature style that they are still serving today.

GSM (Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre blend). Chateauneuf du Pape. Gigondas. Southern Rhône. **All of these words conjure images of rich, red wines** known for their bright, vibrant flavors of spice, brought on by the warmth of the climate in which the grapes Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre are grown. **A climate a bit like that of Paso Robles, where cool nights, warm days, and typically light rains mean a longer growing season.** This allows the grapes to have more hang time in comparison with other grape-growing regions, resulting in fully mature fruit whose acid chemistry is kept in balance, just like Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre grown in the Southern Rhône region of France.

Introducing, Adelaida Winery. Paso Robles is a diverse viticultural growing region, with three major areas: the eastern sector, the southwestern hills of the Templeton Gap, and the northwestern elevations of Adelaide Hills. As the range moves toward the ocean, the elevation climbs to nearly 1,900 feet.

The Adelaida Keeper 2009 is a blend of 38% Grenache, 29% Mourvedre, 20% Syrah, 11% Cinsault, and 2% Counoise. The grapes in this wine are sourced exclusively from Anna's Vineyard, one of the Van Steenwyck family's Estate vineyards, grown in an ideal year for grape-growing, one in which the delayed harvest allowed even longer hang time. Bright cherry confit on the nose is balanced with earthy blackberry on the palate, and notes of coffee and Mediterranean herbs surprise and delight the taster on the finish. Enjoy this conversation piece with lamb, grilled meats, or on its own!

Holly — August 2012