

**Zaca Mesa Winery****2005 Roussanne, Estate Grown & Bottled
(Santa Ynez Valley)**

Roussanne can be big and buxom, a D-cup kinda gal that hasn't seen her feet in years. This one looks golden raisin-rich, and entices with major aromas of honey, fig and ripe apricots. Truly a decadent nose. But on the palate, she's no heavyweight, and can easily tie her footwear without, ahem, interference. From a true pioneer in Rhône varietals comes this brioche filled with cream and apricot marmalade wine.

It is rich in a lean way, as the minerality keeps it pretty taut. The nutty finish speaks of substantial oak influence: 70 percent new for 10 months, in Dargaud-Jaegle and Marcel Cadet cooperage. The fruit comes from eight acres of Zaca Mesa's estate vineyard, Block Foxen C, which was planted with the Tablas clone in 1999.

The 2005 growing season was very mild and dry, with a warming trend during August and September that allowed full flavour development at lower sugar levels than usual. In fact, most Roussannes are north of 15 percent alcohol, so this one does indeed exhibit restraint. The grapes were gently pressed, and fermented in French oak barrels, after which the wine was aged *sur lie en battonage* for 10 months, with regular stirring to enhance the rich, creamy mouth feel. There is a very pleasing, almost flinty acidity that hints of Seckel pears and crisp white peaches. Definitely a wine for rich chicken and fish dishes, or a pizza with garlic prawns, Havarti and dried apricots.

Reviewed January 21, 2008 by [Laura Ness](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Zaca Mesa Winery](#)
Vineyard: Estate Grown & Bottled
Vintage: 2005
Wine: Roussanne
Appellation: [Santa Ynez Valley](#)
Grape: [Roussanne](#)
Price: \$25.00

THE REVIEWER**Laura Ness**

A wine writer and wine judge for major publications and competitions around the country, Laura Ness likens wine to the experience of music. She is always looking for that ubiquitous marriage of rhythm, melody, and flawless execution. What is good music? You

know it when you get lost in it. What is good wine? It is music in your mouth.