

chateau  
**TUMBLEWEED**

## 2013 Fort Stinkbeast

### Background:

An irrigation system failure in 2013 fried our chances of making a dry Alicante Bouschet and left the block at Dragoon Mountain Vineyard severely dehydrated with sugars spiking through the roof. Rather than bail on the fruit entirely, we brought a little in with the idea of making a port-style dessert wine. As the grapes fermented in a single, 3/4-ton bin, the entire cellar filled with a strong aroma bordering on cough syrup. The smell was so intense and unusual that we weren't sure if we should proceed with the experiment, which had by then been dubbed "the Stinkbeast." With harvest sugars well over 30%, we were able to let the fermentation naturally fizzle out around 17.5% alcohol with ~3% residual sugar. As it aged in barrel over the next 5 years, the intensity of this wine subdued and evolved into more delicate characters of ripe plums and berries, chocolate and baking spices.

In early 2018, we jacked the alcohol up to 20% with some beautiful brandy distilled from D.A. Ranch Vineyards Tannat and let the wine age 8 more months before bottling. It's been interesting to watch this wine evolve and take shape over the last 5 years. Hopefully you'll agree with us that it was worth all that effort!

### Varietal Composition and Appellation/Fruit Sourcing:

85% Alicante Bouschet from Dragoon Mountain Vineyard. Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested on Aug 29th

8% Tempranillo from Cimarron Vineyard. Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation.

7% Graciano from Cimarron Vineyard. Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation.

Sugar at harvest: 34.0 Brix (Alicante Bouschet only).

### Cellar Notes:

Destemmed but not crushed to an open-top, 3/4-ton bin.

Cold-soaked 24 hours, then inoculated with specially selected yeasts (VRB).

Hand punched 3-4 times daily.

Inoculated with Malolactic bacteria (Alpha) around 5 Brix.

Pressed at dryness after 13 days skin contact.

Settled 4 days before barreling.

### Aging:

Aged 48 months in 100% neutral French oak and

12 more months in 50% new French oak barrels.

Racked 4 times. Filtered but unfined.

### Stats:

pH: 3.76

TA: 6.0 g/L

RS: 3.0%

Alcohol: 20.0%

Drink now or cellar 5+ years

Production: 98 cases of half-bottles

Winemaker: Joe Bechard

