

The McDowell Story

Nestled in the Mayacamas Mountains of southeastern Mendocino County, McDowell Valley Vineyards was established in 1970. Our vineyard has one of the longest records of continuous wine grape production in California. Syrah and Grenache have been planted on this soil for almost a century, when the Buckman Family made a perfect match in planting Syrah and Grenache vines in the McDowell Valley. It is because of this rich history and distinct growing conditions that in 1982 McDowell Valley obtained one of the earliest BATF viticultural appellations. Today, of the 330 acres of grapes planted in the 500-acre valley, nearly a third are dedicated to Rhône varieties such as Syrah, Grenache, and Viognier.

Today McDowell is a renowned producer of Rhône varietal wines, utilizing the grapes from those original vineyards, which were replanted in 1948 using the same genetic material. Bill Crawford, owner and winemaker, has spent the last 30 years here in the McDowell Valley working in every phase of the operation. Truly a family business, working by his side the last 30 years have also been Romero Gonzalez and Stoney Bray and their families, who have managed the vineyards and the ranch. Today third generation Crawford's, Bill's three boys, work pulling weeds, painting fences and other odd jobs after school and on weekends.

McDowell has become the leader in research in qualitative selections of rootstocks and clones for Rhône varieties. Bill Crawford believes that advances in the vineyard will be the most significant changes that will come in the next 25 years. Bill is sourcing new clonal selections of Syrah from all over California, as well as France. "In California, the challenge for Rhône varieties continues to be in finding the best combinations of rootstock and fruitwood in the appropriate soil and climate" says Bill.

for additional informational
www.acmewinemarketing.com