

Decanter

Pius, Shadō Red Blend, Paso Robles, Willow Creek, 2021

95

Tasted by: Jonathan Cristaldi
(at Novato, California, 13 May 2025)

Drinking Window: 2025 - 2035

A blend of 65% Cabernet Franc, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Petit Verdot, aged for 30 months in 80% new French oak. Sourced from the Willow Creek District, this is an impressively balanced Paso red, with the oak beautifully integrated and alcohol held at 14.4%. Aromatically pure, it offers cassis, dried wild herbs, and subtle cedarwood.

Medium- to full-bodied on the palate, with firm, structured, fine-grained tannins and seductive cassis fruit layered with peppercorn, sagebrush, and a lengthy slate-stone mineral finish. A marvelous effort from a region often associated with riper, softer styles—this wine delivers heft, verve, and tension in spades.