

[Print This Article](#)

Denner Vineyards

ISSUE 171, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013

Josh Raynolds

Anthony Yount is yet another example of a young Paso winemaker who has set his sights on producing wines that exhibit the region's fruit intensity while striving to rein in its excesses. That's easier said than done, he pointed out, "as our customers have come to expect power and depth in our wines. It's risky to pull a 180 and throw away your playbook, so it's more about fine-tuning the style carefully than an abrupt about-face--more evolution than revolution." Even taking into account the cool 2011 and 2010 vintages, I find the Denner wines to be distinctly more elegant than in the past, with assertive, complex bouquets and harmonious tannins. They're also structured and balanced to age, but with more than enough upfront fruitiness and aromatic interest to provided immediate appeal.

2012 Viognier Paso Robles (\$38) (raised in 320-liter French oak *cigares*, 20% of them new): Brilliant yellow. High-pitched aromas of candied citrus fruits, fresh flowers and toasty lees. Fleshy but energetic, offering intense lemon, tangerine and poached pear flavors and suggestions of sweet butter and chamomile. Picks up a gingery nuance with air and finishes with outstanding clarity, power and length. This is one of the best viogniers I've had from outside of Condrieu in a long time -- in fact, it's up there with some of the best Condrieus I've had recently. **93**

2012 Theresa White Wine Paso Robles (\$38) (made from 50% roussanne, 25% grenache blanc, 20% picpoul and 5% marsanne): Light yellow. Intensely perfumed aromas of fresh citrus fruits and honeysuckle, with vibrant mineral and ginger notes contributing energy. Firm, finely etched orange, lemon zest and pear skin flavors stain the palate, gaining sweetness and depth with air. A sexy floral quality lingers on a long, sappy finish that shows very good focus and vivacity. This wine's power will make it work well with richer foods but it has the nerviness to pair nicely with delicate dishes as well. **92**

2011 Grenache Paso Robles (\$58) (aged in a combination of puncheons and concrete tanks): Glass-staining ruby. Pungent, floral-accented red and dark berries on the nose, with a bright mineral quality adding vivacity. Spicy black raspberry and cherry-cola flavors become sweeter with air and pick up an exotic touch of blood orange. Maintains focus and energy through a long, juicy finish framed by silky, fine-grained tannins. There's still a youthful tension to this wine that suggest at least another year or so of bottle age is in order before jumping into it. **92**

2011 Theresa White Wine Paso Robles (\$38) (60% roussanne, 25% grenache blanc and 15% marsanne): Bright yellow-gold. Aromas of quince, beeswax, lemon rind and licorice, with a spicy overtone. Fleshy but dry, offering tightly focused pit and orchard fruit flavors that pick up a nutty quality with air. Closes dry and nervy, with very good clarity and spicy persistence. **91**

2010 Grenache Paso Robles (\$55) (15% alcohol): Ruby-red. Spicy red and dark berries on the highly perfumed nose. Plush, expansive and appealingly sweet, offering intense black raspberry and bitter chocolate flavors that pick up a floral nuance with air. Smooth and broad on the subtly tannic, clinging finish, with its lingering notes of red berry compote and spicecake. **91**

2010 Syrah Bassetti Vineyard Central Coast (\$50) Glass-staining purple. A highly complex bouquet displays sexy, mineral-accented red and dark berry and cola qualities, along with notes of anise, violet and black olive. Shows intense spiciness on the palate, offering sweet black raspberry, cherry and floral pastille flavors. Becomes spicier with air and shows outstanding clarity on the smoky, persistent finish. Delivers power and energy, with fine-grained tannins lending focus and grip.

93

2010 The Dirt Worshipper Red Wine Paso Robles (\$60) (93% syrah and 7% viognier): Opaque purple. Heady aromas of dark berry liqueur, Indian spices, olive and potpourri show impressive intensity and delineation. Velvety and concentrated, with serious depth and surprising energy to its palate-staining blackberry and cherry-cola flavors. Offers a suave combination of sweet dark berry fruit and floral notes, with excellent finishing power and vivacity. About 40% of the syrah in this year's blend came from the Bassetti vineyard.

93

2010 The Ditch Digger Paso Robles (\$60) (40% grenache, 30% syrah, 20% mourvedre, 5% counoise and 5% cinsault): Inky ruby. Assertive aromas of black raspberry, licorice and candied flowers, with smoke and pipe tobacco nuances adding complexity. Sweet and lush but juicy, with intense berry preserve character and plush, seamless texture. Very densely packed but lively, with harmonious tannins adding shape to a sweet, clinging finish. I've little doubt that this wine will reward patience but there's plenty to like right now. **92(+?)**

2010 Syrah Paso Robles (\$50) Inky ruby. A complex, perfumed bouquet displays scents of blackberry, cherry pit, espresso, pungent flowers and olive tapenade. Juicy, sweet and intensely flavored, with a peppery nuance adding lift to plush black and blue fruit flavors. Finishes smooth, broad and very long, with ripe, even tannins and lingering spiciness. **92**

2010 Mother Of Exiles Paso Robles (\$68) (60% cabernet sauvignon, 30% petit verdot, 5% merlot and 5% cabernet franc; 80% new French oak): Opaque purple. Spicy cherry, blackcurrant, pipe tobacco, vanilla and smoky oak on the nose. Shows suave, velvety texture and intense dark fruit compote and floral pastille flavors that gain power in the glass. Finishes with supple tannins, a hint of candied lavender and excellent staying power

93

2011 The Ditch Digger Paso Robles (\$63) (40% grenache, 30% syrah, 15% mourvedre, 10% cinsault and 5% counoise): Inky ruby. An exotically perfumed bouquet displays scents of dark berries, potpourri and incense, along with a smoky note of olive tapenade. Rich, palate-coating cassis and mulberry preserve flavors are complemented by smoky mineral and bitter chocolate nuances. An emphatically rich but energetic wine that finishes with a strong jolt of smoky Indian spices and smooth tannins. **93**

2011 The Dirt Worshipper Red Wine Paso Robles (\$63) (95% syrah and 5% viognier): Glass-staining ruby. High-pitched dark berry and floral pastille aromas are sharpened by notes of cracked pepper and five-spice powder. Sappy, spicy, intense flavors show potent black and blue fruit character and notes of olive tapenade, violet and candied licorice. Finishes sweet and long, with resonating florality and excellent length. **93**

[return to web view\(14185367\)](#)

©2013 WineAccess. All Rights Reserved.