



2005 Syrah

Vintage Summary

The 2005 vintage began with heavily moisturized soils as the result of an extremely wet winter. Early spring remained cool and wet, providing vines with all the water necessary to promote a strong, well developed canopy. Crop loads were up to 25% higher than normal. July and August temperatures lingered in the mid 90's, allowing healthy canopies to absorb the consistent heat and bring veraison quickly. Fall maintained healthy, moderate temperatures around the 88-degree range. Our Syrah was harvested from late September through early October.

Vineyard Practices

Aggressively pruning the vines helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. In June, shoots were around 6 to 8 inches, and we removed any growth not intentionally left at pruning. To help intensify color, ripen tannins and maintain healthy vines, we increased sun exposure and air circulation by removing laterals and creating a tunnel through the middle of the canopy. In June, an early crop removal pass was done to balance out the unusual heavy crop load. Syrah clusters tend to be large and have shoulders or wings. Prior to veraison, we removed these shoulders and wings to ensure we had even maturity throughout the vineyard. Each shoot was reduced down to one cluster, knowing that Syrah grapes pH and acid levels correspond with crop load. The moderate, consistent temperatures allowed us to pick in late September, early October.

Winemaking Practices

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, our crusher-destemmer removed all of the stems and lightly crushed the grapes. The must (crushed grapes) was then placed in a stainless steel tank. The grape juice was cold soaked for 48 hours to help intensify color and phenolics. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense gamy and spicy characteristics, fermented the wine to dryness over a twelve-day period. During fermentation, the Syrah was pumped over twice per day for 45 minutes. We aerated the wine to expose it to oxygen throughout the fermentation. This helps reduction of Hydrogen Sulfide (rotten egg aromas), and helps fixate color. After the wine finished fermentation we continued pump overs for another two weeks. Malo-lactic fermentation took place in barrel to help integrate the 24% new American Oak.

Tasting Notes

Inky black with a light purple edge, our 2005 Syrah is rich in flavor and depth. The nose has layers of black fruit, pepper, wet stone and overtones of bacon fat and smoke. The palate is soft upon entry, yielding Bing cherry, cassis and evolving into a weighty mid plate that defines complexity. The finish of this 100% Syrah is soft, lengthy, and enriched with supple, elegant tannins.

Specifics

Barrel aging: 18 months in 225-L oak barrels, 24% new

Blended: 6/11-6/13, 2006

Harvest dates: 9/26-10/4, 2005

Brix at Harvest: 25.6

Harvest method: 100% hand-harvested

Fermentation: 12 days with UV-43

Maceration: 21 to 24 days including fermentation

Total Acidity: .71 g/100ml

Pump overs: 2 times daily during fermentation

Yeasts: UV-43

Barrel replacement: 20-30% annually on average

Racking: every 3 months

Fining: none

Filtering: none

Bottled: April 13-16, 2007

pH: 3.85

Alcohol: 15.0%

Barrels: Minnesota

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