



2005 DIERBERG VINEYARD SYRAH, SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

Vineyard Notes

Our vineyard, located at the far eastern end of the Santa Ynez Valley, is both the warmest and the highest elevation vineyard in the appellation. Backing up to the lower slopes of the San Rafael Mountains which loom high above the ranch, our Santa Ynez ranch features a unique range of weathered sand, gravel and alluvial cobbles over a clay/loam subsoil. We chose the coldest and windiest portion of our vineyard as the home for our limited plantings of Syrah, feeling that this more extreme microclimate would help focus and refine the rich flavors we generally expect from the ranch. The upper portion the Syrah block, planted to clone 838 on 101-14 rootings has a lighter textured soil—largely sandy loam—with a moderate amount of golf ball-sized stones. The lower portion, planted to clone 877 also on 101-14 rootings, stretches down towards the creek bed and offers a more weathered gravel profile. Both areas are very well drained. The Syrah is managed without the use of chemical herbicides and only small amounts of sulfur and copper are used for mildew and botrytis control. Both products are certified organic.

Winemaking

Each fermentor is filled with hand sorted, destemmed and only lightly crushed fruit. Generally, 20% whole clusters are retained to help emphasize the more savory flavors that our vineyard tends to produce. Three to five days of cold soak is followed by a moderately warm fermentation with native yeast only. At the end of active fermentation, the must is heated to 95°Fahrenheit for three days to extract every last bit of color, flavor and phenolic material that the grapes have to offer. Free run wine is moved to barrel “dirty,” meaning that much of the fermentation lees are kept in contact with the wine and an uninoculated malolactic fermentation typically finishes in the late spring following harvest. After 22 months in 2 year old demi-muids (158 gallon barrels) and a light fining with fresh egg whites, the 2005 Dierberg Syrah was bottled unfiltered.

Tasting Notes

Our 2005 Syrah is a big yet very supple wine. Nearly opaque in color, with maroon highlights, it is very impressive in the glass. Aromas of grilled meat, blackberry, black cherry, smoke, espresso and lavender are complemented by similar, very rich flavors. The wine is enormous in the mouth—an “Adult Portion” as we like to say—but it retains a sense of elegance, grace and vibrancy that is uncommon for such Syrahs. Gratifying now, this wine will continue to improve through for another 4 to 6 years.

Alc. 15.1%

pH: 3.98

TA: 4.1 g/L

100% Syrah

704 cases produced

Suggested Retail: \$34.00

Release Date: May 15, 2008