



2007 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 new "Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara" 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. Syrah block on the upper portion of the ranch have lighter textured soil—largely sandy loam—with a moderate amount of golf ball-sized stones and are planted to clone 838 on I01-I4 rootings. The lower portion, planted to clone 877 also on I01-I4 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.

VINTAGE NOTES

Drought-level rainfall and severe winter freezes during the December holidays started the growing season in an atypical fashion. Many young shoots were stunted due to the freezes and only began to show acceptable vigor when we plowed under our "green manure" cover crop consisting of oats, bell beans, vetch and peas in late spring. Conditions during bloom time were ideal, with moderate temperatures and an absence of our normal winds, and flowering completed in less than a

week. Meanwhile, set was erratic from shoot to shoot, with some shoots setting as many as three clusters while others set none. In spite of low winter rainfall, weather during the growing season was generally cool and we irrigated very little, only 2 to 5 gallons per vine for the entire season. Veraison was very even and weather during harvest was warm and steady. We harvested a tiny but very concentrated Syrah crop over the course of three days during the third week of September.

WINEMAKING

Each fermentor is filled with hand sorted, and only lightly crushed fruit. Building on our positive experience from the 2006 vintage with stem inclusion, the 2007 Syrah was fermented as 100% whole clusters, bringing a very savory, Rhône-like character to the wine. A three day cold soak was followed by a moderately warm fermentation with native yeast only. At the end of active fermentation, the must was heated to 95°Fahrenheit for three days to extract every last bit of color, flavor and phenolic material that the grapes had to offer. Free run wine was moved to barrel "dirty," meaning that much of the fermentation lees were kept in contact with the wine and an uninoculated malolactic fermentation finished in July following harvest. After 22 months in 3 year old demi-muids (158 gallon barrels) and a light fining with 6 fresh egg whites per demi-muid, the 2007 Dierberg Syrah was bottled unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2007 Dierberg Syrah is a dense and formidable wine to say the least. Aromas of beef jerky, blackberry, pepper corn, smoke, wild sage brush and classic Southern Rhône garrigue are complemented by similar, super-concentrated flavors. Similar flavors follow on the palate. What is most striking about the 2007 edition of our Syrah is its impeccable sense of balance, walking a fine line between fruit character and savory elements. I encourage you to try a bottle of this sophisticated beauty immediately and to cellar another for as many as 15 years.

Alc. 14.7  
pH: 3.86  
TA: 5.6 g/L  
100% Syrah

DIERBERG

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