



VARIETAL & VINEYARD: This Southern Rhone-style Syrah (75% Syrah and 25% Grenache) comes from both our benchland vineyard and our recently planted vines located on the winery property. While our 6-acre benchland block has been the exclusive source for our Syrah program through 2001, the new plantings feature highly touted Northern Rhone clones 174, 877, 383 and 470. Our Grenache is from the three clones of Grenache Noir also planted on the winery property. All of our vineyards are located in the Dry Creek Valley.

VINTAGE: We've already extolled the virtues of the 2002 vintage in our previously released wine. Harvest conditions were typically ideal -- sunny, warm days with cool and foggy mornings -- enabling us to push the ripeness envelope. We picked the grapes super-ripe on September 24 through September 27, at sugars ranging from 25.5 to 26 degree brix. By then the skins were soft and seeds were brown. We've learned that picking Syrah at this stage of physiological ripeness results in added aromatics and flavors. All of the 2002 wines have incredible color and fruit.

WINEMAKING: The grapes were cold soaked for 5 days in closed-top stainless steel tanks before fermentation. The wine was aggressively aerated during fermentation with pump-overs being done twice daily through a sump and screen. We also used the occasional *delestages*, which is French for "drain and return". The new plantings of Syrah really add another layer of aromatics and flavor to this wine. The 25% Grenache serves to boost aromatics and soften the Syrah. The wine was aged in French Oak (including several 92 gallon mini-puncheon barrels), 15% new, for 14 months before being bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

STYLE/DESCRIPTION: Our "Little Bro" Syrah is everything you would expect from a younger sibling: easy going, and unpretentious. It is dark with sweet blackberry/raspberry fruit. Will it age? Very well... but who cares? Grip it and rip it.

Harvested: 9/24 through 9/27/02

Total acidity: 0.61g/100ml

pH: 3.75

Oak aging: 14 months; French barrels and puncheons, 15% new

Blend: 75% Syrah, 25% Grenache Noir

Alcohol: 14.8%

Bottled: 11/11/03

Cases Produced: 550