



VARIETAL & VINEYARD: 2005 marks the first vintage where 75% of our Syrah “*normale*” comes from our winery block vineyard. Here, we have the much-heralded Northern Rhone clones 174, 877, 383 and 470; all planted on low-vigor rootstock. We have been increasingly impressed with the complexity of flavors coming from these vines since 2002. 25% of this 2005 Syrah comes from our original 6-acre benchland vineyard, which has been the mainstay of our Syrah program since 1997.

VINTAGE: 2005 was “our kind of vintage” because it was a long growing season that featured cooler-than-normal weather in August and September, followed by a warm October. Such conditions were ideal for allowing the grapes to mature slowly and develop deep, rich flavors and color. We harvested our Syrah between October 9th and 16th. This cool growing season really enhanced pepper, olive and floral aromas; many of the characteristics that we appreciate in Northern Rhone Syrah.

WINEMAKING: The grapes were cold soaked for 5 days in a variety of small open-top and closed-top stainless steel tanks before fermentation began with indigenous yeast. The wine was aggressively aerated during fermentation: punch-downs and pump-overs were done twice daily. We blended a small amount of Grenache into the Syrah, which gives the wine a juicy mouth-feel and additional fruitiness. Our 2005 Syrah was aged in only French Oak, 30% new, for 14 months. It was bottled **unfined and unfiltered**.

STYLE/DESCRIPTION: This medium- to full-bodied wine is a personal favorite because it strikes a great balance between Old and New World Syrah. The complex set of spicy and floral aromas are followed by sweet blueberry and blackberry flavors. While this wine has a lush Dry Creek side to it, the juicy acidity will have you thinking of a St. Joseph that has been lifting weights. It is already drinking nicely, and should continue to do so for 3 to 5 years.

Mick

Harvested: 10/9/05 through 10/16/05

Total acidity: 0.69g/100ml

pH: 3.85

Oak aging: 14 months; French barrels, 30% new

Blend: 96% Syrah, 4% Grenache

Alcohol: 14.8%

Bottled: 12/6/06

Cases Produced: 725