



VARIETAL & VINEYARD: This Syrah comes from the western section of our 6-acre vineyard located on the Eastside Dry Creek Bench. The vines on this little knoll are much less vigorous due to the well-drained soils. Consequently, these vines produce smaller grapes with more concentrated flavors and tannins than the balance of the Syrah vineyard. Our typical yield in this section is less than six pounds per vine.

VINTAGE/HARVEST: A late spring frost drastically reduced our Syrah crop in 2008. Summer temperatures were generally moderate except for a heat spell in late August. We harvested our Syrah between September 10th and September 23rd — slightly earlier than normal, due to the low yield of this vintage. The late spring frost prevented us from using our winery block fruit, which we lost 70% of. Moderate growing seasons really enhance pepper and olive aromas, characteristics we appreciate in Northern Rhone Syrah.

VINIFICATION: We fermented our Benchland Syrah in several small 1 to 3 ton tanks and wooden vats. A small portion of this wine was fermented as whole clusters for enhanced aromatics. After a 5-day cold soak, fermentation began with indigenous yeast. The small tank size allows us to regulate extraction between punching down and pumping over. Once in barrel, we routinely stirred lees for added texture and complexity. We aged this wine in 45% new French Oak for 17 months. This 100% Syrah was bottled **unfined** and **unfiltered**.

STYLE/DESCRIPTION: This 2008 Benchland Syrah has the refined tannin structure of its 2007 counterpart, only with more bacony, chocolaty character. It shows the characteristics we love from this vineyard site: opaque color, with intense blackberry, chocolate, clove, and smoked meat flavors. It has the structure to age 5 to 8 years from vintage.

Harvested: 9/28, 9/29/08
Total acidity: 0.61g/100ml
pH: 3.88
Oak aging: 17 mos. in French Oak barrels, 45% new

Blend: 100% Syrah
Alcohol: 14.6%
Bottled: 4/5/10
Cases Produced: 250