



VARIETAL & VINEYARD: Our 2008 Syrah “normale” comes primarily from our original 6-acre benchland vineyard, which has been the mainstay of our Syrah program since 1997. We planted this vineyard in 1991 (when there wasn’t much Syrah here in Dry Creek) using bud-wood we obtained from the Durell vineyard in Sonoma. Since 2004, we have farmed this vineyard following the natural cycles emphasizing the relationship between plants and soils, without the use of pesticides or herbicides.

VINTAGE: Late spring frost drastically reduced our Syrah crop in 2008. Summer temperatures were generally moderate except for heat spell in late-August. We harvested our Syrah between September 10th and September 23rd. The late spring frost prevented us from using our winery block fruit, as we lost up to 70 % of that fruit. The moderate growing season really enhanced pepper and olive aromas, characteristics we appreciate in Northern Rhone Syrah.

WINEMAKING: All of the Syrah from our benchland vineyard is de-stemmed and lightly crushed prior to being fed into tanks. Our standard winemaking includes a 5-day cold soak of the must before fermentation begins with indigenous yeast. We use a variety of small open-top and closed-top stainless steel and wooden tanks. The wine was aggressively aerated during fermentation: punch-downs and pump-overs were done twice daily. The wine was only racked twice during its life in French oak barrels, 30% new.

STYLE/DESCRIPTION: This medium to full-bodied wine will have you thinking of our 2006 Syrah, since it was derived from the benchland vineyard. The wine really shows the pedigree of that site, featuring a complex set of blackberry and grilled meat aromas and flavors. It combines the earthy savory flavors of Northern Rhone Syrah in a lush, Dry Creek wine. Our ‘08 Syrah is already drinking nicely and should continue to do so for 3 to 5 years.

Mick Unti

Harvested: 9/10 through 9/23/08
Total acidity: 0.61g/100ml
pH: 3.85
Oak aging: 13 months; French barrels, 30% new

Blend: 100% Syrah
Alcohol: 14.5%
Bottled: 12/6/09
Cases Produced: 396