



Spicerack

Vineyards

S Y R A H

P A S O R O B L E S

• V I N T A G E 2 0 0 4 •

Winter precipitation in Paso Robles was normal and Spring jumped out at us early. Summer was typically warm and sunny and pushed the vines along nicely. We irrigated a bit in mid August which protected the vines from the heat, and brought in small Syrah berries on September 9.

• V I N E Y A R D •

Our “*Rack & Roll*” Syrah comes from a very special “single vineyard” site located in the eastern hills of Paso Robles whose exemplary sustainable viticultural practices have been officially recognized by the State of California. Vineyard terrain is characterized by dry, gently rolling western sloping hills offering an environment very well-suited to robust Rhône varietals. The vineyard soil profile is shockingly white – almost 15 feet of “*Camatta Series*” chalky-white substrate covered by a foot or so of loose gravelly loam. It is quite infertile and very well-drained. The vineyard is planted to the Estrella Syrah Clone and “Barossa Heritage” Shiraz material from a 100+ year-old block in Australia’s Barossa Valley, providing perhaps the most direct link to the original, pre-phylloxera French Syrah material available in North America.

Regulated “deficit” irrigation practices resulted in *extremely* small and concentrated berries which had a high “skin to juice” ratio, leading to a deeply-colored wine with a broad aromatic spectrum and rich texture. Smaller plantings of Mourvèdre are also grown nearby on the estate. After veraison, we manually culled unevenly ripened bunches which reduced yield to less than 2.5 tons/acre.

Regional Composition: Paso Robles Single Vineyard – 100% Varietal Composition: 96% Syrah, 6% Mourvèdre

• F E R M E N T A T I O N A N D M A T U R A T I O N •

Compact bunches of tiny Syrah berries were hand-harvested on September 9 (27.4 Brix), followed shortly thereafter by Mourvèdre. Grapes were destemmed & crushed (~5% whole berry) and “cold soaked” for three days in open-top temperature-controlled fermenters. On Day 4 fermentation began naturally with native yeasts and was later inoculated with cultured yeast. Warm fermentation temperature (85°-90°F) moved fermentation along nicely and multiple pump-overs were the rule of the road as Syrah *loves* oxygen. On Day 11 the still-fermenting Syrah was pressed into 59 gallon French oak barriques where it slowly completed primary and secondary fermentations. Press fractions were kept separate. Barrels were of the highest quality; 100% new French, three-year air dried, medium toast with toasted heads and handcrafted by Cadus, Boutes & Francois Frères. Twenty-two months in barrel with multiple hand rackings (again – Syrah *loves* oxygen!) contributed exotic spiciness and wonderful mouth-feel. Before bottling (Fall 2006) we culled two barrels which weren’t up to snuff and blended in one barrel of Mourvèdre which toned down the exuberant qualities of the Syrah while building overall complexity, palate grip and adding an exotic “*meatiness*”.

We call this special single-vineyard Syrah “*Rack & Roll*” to reflect the many times it was racked and the rolling of the barrels, and to characterize the high energy music it enjoyed while maturing in cellar.

pH: 3.78 TA: 0.70 g/100mL Alcohol: 14.4% Total Production: 19 barrels Suggested Retail Price: \$25.00

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