



VINEYARD SOURCES: 86% *Camatta Hills Vineyard (San Luis Obispo County)*, 14% *Bien Nacido Vineyard (Santa Maria Valley)*. Located in northern San Luis Obispo County, the Camatta Hills Vineyard features decomposed limestone soil, resulting in small, concentrated berries. Relatively warm temperatures produce a lush, fully developed style of Syrah. In contrast, the Bien Nacido Vineyard is situated in a very cool, low vigor site in Santa Maria Valley. Berries are also small and intensely flavored, but the expression is more richly structured, with full tannins and deep, dark fruit characteristics.

VINTAGE: The 2008 vintage was exceptional on the Central Coast. Yields were below normal due in part to a freeze in January and a frost in April that affected new growth and young clusters. In addition, rainfall totals for the 2008 season were below average for the second year in a row. Lower yields as well as small berry size equated to superb concentration and richness in the wines. Syrah from the Camatta Vineyard was harvested on September 4; grapes from Bien Nacido were picked on November 2.

WINEMAKING: This Syrah was crafted using an adaptation of Australian winemaking techniques. Focusing on extraction early in the fermentation process brings out the best expression of the grape and minimizes the risk of harsh tannins. The grapes were crushed into tanks and given a four day cold soak. A saignée was immediately drawn off to further enhance concentration. During the most active days of fermentation, we performed 'rack and returns' for additional extraction. The wine was pressed immediately at the conclusion of fermentation, and then aged 19 months in 60-gallon French oak barrels with 40% new oak in the mix.

TASTING NOTES: This wine offers a unique and complementary blend of warm climate Syrah with a touch of cold climate Syrah. Rich aromas of dark plum and ripe boysenberry are enhanced by hints of white and black pepper. The wine's lush mouthfeel fills the palate and is gracefully supported by a rich structure and well balanced thread of tannin. The wine's plush texture and layers of complexity will only be enhanced with additional time in the cellar.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.9 g/l

pH: 3.53

Alcohol: 14.9%

Production: 169 cases