



VINEYARD SOURCE: 100% *Watch Hill Vineyard (Los Alamos Valley)*. 100% *Syrah*. Planted in 2002, Watch Hill Vineyard is a relatively cool site, located between Santa Maria and Buellton in the Los Alamos Valley of Santa Barbara County, California. The property consists of about 22 acres of Syrah vines planted to the newest and best Syrah clones and rootstocks. The soils are a mix of sand and clay low in nutrients, which helps keep the cluster size small and contributes to the striking dark color and rich concentration of the resulting wines.

VINTAGE: Contrary to the erratic weather of the 2010 and 2011 vintages, 2012 featured very favorable, well-timed weather patterns throughout the growing season. Winter rainfall was below average, but showers in March replenished the soil profile just as the vines were beginning the growth cycle. Consistently cool summer temperatures and several warm spells in September and October helped fully ripen the fruit. Crop size was characteristically small, which promoted concentration and complexity in the fruit. Watch Hill Syrah grapes were harvested on October 10.

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, 'rack and returns' were performed for additional extraction. The Syrah was pressed immediately at the conclusion of fermentation, and aged for 16 months in French oak barrels with 35% new oak in the mix. The wine was bottled on April 17, 2014.

TASTING NOTES: This Syrah beautifully displays the sophistication and intensity typical of Watch Hill fruit. Very complex aromas of blackberry, currant and dark plum are complemented by hints of blueberry and black pepper. Explosive flavors of dense blackberry, plum and a touch of anise are supported by a rich mid-palate, moderate tannins and a bright touch of natural acidity that perfectly balances the wine. While approachable upon release, this wine will deepen in complexity and richness with additional time in the cellar.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 6.2 g/l

pH: 3.59

Alcohol: 14.4%

Production: 163 cases