



VINEYARD SOURCE: 100% *Thompson Vineyard (Los Alamos Valley)*. 100% *Syrah*. Planted in the late 1980s, Thompson Vineyard has a well-deserved reputation for outstanding Syrah. The vineyard is planted along the slopes of Alisos Canyon in the Los Alamos Valley, a relatively cool appellation, located between Santa Maria and Buellton in Santa Barbara County. Vines are planted on their own rootstock to the highly regarded Estrella clone, which was propagated in Paso Robles, reportedly from cuttings from Hermitage vineyards in the Rhone Valley. Soils are low nutrient sandy loam, which helps restrict yields and promote vineyard expression.

VINTAGE: 2013 is hailed as a near perfect vintage across the state of California, described as “early, even and excellent.” Harvest began about two weeks earlier than normal in Santa Barbara County and weather patterns were ideal—every week brought a warm up followed by a cool down in temperatures. This pattern allowed grapes to develop slowly and evenly, enabling winemakers to pick at perfect ripeness. Yields were slightly above normal due to a greater number of clusters on each vine, but berry size remained small. Thompson Vineyard grapes were harvested on October 17 and 22.

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. 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 21 months in French oak barrels with 43% new oak in the mix. The wine was bottled on August 13, 2015.

TASTING NOTES: This Syrah offers gorgeous, full-bodied aromatics and flavors that seemingly leap out of the glass. Sensuous aromas of black plum, boysenberry and blackberry are complemented by hints of anise, fresh ground pepper, wet stone and a touch of French oak. The flavors are profoundly rich and include ripe plum, boysenberry, cured meat, tar and herbes de Provence. Plush, well balanced tannins span the wine from beginning to end, culminating in a remarkably long, opulent finish. Noted for its exceptional ageability, this Thompson Vineyard Syrah will continue to develop complexity and richness for a decade or more.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.9 g/l

pH: 3.65

Alcohol: 14.6%

Production: 87 cases