



2015 "A" CUVÉE SYRAH

Appellation	Santa Barbara County
T.A.	5.6 g/l
pH	3.74
Alcohol	14.5%
Production	133 cases

VINEYARDS

50% McGinley Vineyard and 50% Watch Hill Vineyard

McGinley Vineyard is located in the Happy Canyon AVA of eastern Santa Ynez Valley, a traditional Syrah-growing zone that enjoys a relatively warm microclimate due to its inland position. The Syrah grapes were picked along with a small amount of Viognier and were co-fermented, a Rhône tradition that adds a touch of brightness and floral notes to the finished Syrah. Watch Hill Vineyard is a moderately cool site, located in the Los Alamos Valley of Santa Barbara County in closer proximity to the coast where cool days and nights prevail.

VINTAGE

The 2015 vintage is a record vintage in many ways. It was the earliest harvest on record, eclipsing the previous 2014 record by up to two weeks for most varieties. A relatively mild winter led to an early start to the ripening cycle. Once buds began to push, mild spring weather allowed them to develop at an accelerated pace uninterrupted by spring frosts. Yields were also record low, averaging 30-50% below historical averages. Near perfect ripening conditions coupled with small berry size resulted in superb quality fruit. Grapes for this Syrah were harvested on September 1 and September 3.

WINEMAKING

This Syrah was crafted using an adaptation of Australian winemaking techniques focused on extraction early in the fermentation process, minimizing the risk of harsh tannins. The grapes were crushed into tanks and given a four-day cold soak. At the conclusion of fermentation, the lots were pressed immediately and aged separately for 19 months in French oak barrels with 18% new oak in the mix. The lots were then blended and bottled on May 10, 2017.

TASTING NOTES

This wine is one of Ken's signature Syrahs in which he has expertly blended warmer climate and cooler climate Syrah for a superbly integrated and balanced wine. Rich aromatics of juicy black plum, black raspberry and cassis mingle with hints of earth, cracked pepper and roasted fowl. Vibrant flavors of dark plum accented by subtle notes of dried herbs, espresso and toasted marshmallow are enveloped in a luxurious mouthfeel. Velvety tannins beautifully bridge the wine from beginning to end, culminating in a lingering finish. The plush texture and layers of complexity will only be enhanced with additional time in the cellar.