



2018 WATCH HILL SYRAH

Appellation	Santa Barbara County
T.A.	6.9 g/l
pH	3.69
Alcohol	14.8%
Production	92 cases

VINEYARDS

100% Watch Hill Vineyard

Planted in 2002, Watch Hill Vineyard is a relatively cool site, located between Santa Maria and Buellton in the newly created Alisos Canyon AVA in Santa Barbara County. The property consists of about 22 acres of Syrah vines planted to the finest Syrah clones and rootstocks, including Clone 7 sourced for this wine. The soil is gravelly, rocky loam on a steep hillside, 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

The 2018 vintage was our latest harvest since 2012. Late rains in March were well-timed and budbreak occurred about two weeks later than recent averages. Temperatures throughout the spring and summer remained cool, ideal for retaining natural acidity in the grapes. Canopies were healthy and well positioned to go the distance to ripen the fruit. Berries were small, and yields were customarily low, resulting in excellent concentration and intensity in the fruit. Grapes from Watch Hill Vineyard were harvested on October 20, 2018.

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 for 21 months in French oak barrels with 25% new oak in the mix. The wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered on August 20, 2020.

TASTING NOTES

This wine showcases the vivid aromatics and flavors found in cool climate Syrah. Savory aromas of cacao nibs and coffee marry seamlessly with luscious flavors of dark plum, raspberries and dark chocolate. Ripe tannins and plentiful acidity frame the palate and flow seamlessly into a finish of raspberries and white pepper. The velvety texture and complex profile will only be enhanced with additional time in the cellar.