



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: 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. Thompson Vineyard Syrah grapes were harvested on October 19.

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. The Syrah was pressed at the conclusion of fermentation, and aged for 23 months in French oak barrels with 40% new oak in the mix. The wine was bottled on September 14, 2014.

TASTING NOTES: This Syrah seamlessly fuses elegance and finesse with richness and intensity. Captivating aromas of ripe boysenberry, blackberry and deep plum are complemented by hints of black pepper and subtle earthtones. Bright, luscious flavors are supported by firm tannins that gracefully bridge the wine from beginning to end. The wine culminates in a long, silky 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: 3.59

Alcohol: 14.2%

Production: 94 cases