



2017 "A" CUVÉE SYRAH

Appellation	Santa Barbara County
T.A.	6.0 g/l
pH	3.75
Alcohol	14.4%
Production	117 cases

VINEYARDS

67% McGinley Vineyard and 33% 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

Abundant winter rainfall in 2017 helped ease a five-year drought in California, replenishing soils and leaching out any accumulated salts. Mild spring weather averted any frost issues, and set the stage for excellent bloom and set. A heat spike in early September sent grape sugars soaring toward ripeness and vintners hastened the pace to keep up. Cool temperatures quickly returned, and remained cool for the rest of the harvest season. Yields ranged from average to up to 50% below average, resulting in excellent concentration and intensity in the fruit. Grapes were harvested from McGinley on September 12 and Watch Hill on September 13.

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 18 months in French oak barrels with 15% new oak in the mix. The lots were then blended and bottled on April 3, 2019.

TASTING NOTES

This wine is one of Ken's signature Syrahs in which he has blended warmer climate and cooler climate Syrah for a superbly integrated and balanced wine. The wine leads with rich, concentrated aromas of blackberry and cassis along with accents of cracked black pepper, fig and herbes de Provence. Vibrant flavors of juicy blackberry and plum are highlighted by hints of cured meat and rose petal, which culminate in a lingering finish and touch of spice. The plush texture and complex profile will only be enhanced with additional time in the cellar.