



2017 WATCH HILL SYRAH

Appellation	Santa Barbara County
T.A.	6.45 g/l
pH	3.69
Alcohol	14.7%
Production	67 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 soils are a mix of sand and clay, 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

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. Fruit from Watch Hill Vineyard was harvested on September 13, 2017.

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 17 months in French oak barrels with 33% new oak in the mix. The wine was bottled on April 3, 2019.

TASTING NOTES

This wine showcases the vivid aromatics and flavors found in cool climate Syrah. The wine is packed with rich, concentrated aromas of blackberry jam, cassis and blueberry along with accents of black pepper, anise and vanilla. Luscious flavors of dark plum, black currant and a hint of baking spice are supported by ripe tannins and bright natural acidity. The velvety texture and complex profile will only be enhanced with additional time in the cellar.