

# 2014 SYRAH

## SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Syrah has been our flagship wine since 1983 when our vines here produced their first crop. My inspiration for planting this once obscure varietal came from tasting the wines imported from the northern Rhone valley in France by Kermit Lynch. While southern Rhone wines are blends with Grenache predominating, northern Rhone reds are usually 100% syrah, and it was that peppery, spicy character of the varietal that drove me to distraction.

This is our 32nd vintage of syrah! So, is this 2014 Syrah Santa Barbara County just like the previous vintages? Well, no, and that's been the fabulous thing about remaining a tiny, crafty winery. Instead of focusing on growing the size of the operation we have focused on growing the craft. Lots of talk, lots of tasting, and plenty of experimentation over the years has brought us to this point.

And the point is that in 2014 we produced a particularly accessible, delicious wine. More than ever we are focused on bringing out syrah's peppery, food friendly personality by avoiding harvesting over-ripe grapes. And in the winery we've modified our fermentation and aging regime to bring out the natural exuberance of this fascinating grape varietal. The 2014 is comprised of mostly cool climate syrah grapes from vineyards stretching from Santa Maria to Lompoc in northern Santa Barbara County. While warmer sites produce easygoing if thick versions of the varietal, cooler sites preserve the lively, exotic floral and spicy side of syrah- and that's the style that we like to drink and share with friends.

The 2014 is comprised of 53% Sebastiano Syrah, 22% Roll Ranch Syrah, 6% White Hawk Syrah, 5% Bien Nacido Syrah, and 14% Sebastiano Grenache. The wine was fermented in small open topped fermenters using 25% whole clusters and was pressed off into mostly older French oak barrels for 12 months of aging. Bottled in November of 2015, this beauty is already showing off its stuff.

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**BLEND** 86% Syrah & 14% Grenache

**VINEYARDS** Bien Nacido, Roll Ranch, White Hawk, & John Sebastiano

**ALCOHOL** 13.5%

**VINIFICATION** 10% New French Oak

**BARREL AGING** 13 Months

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### PRESS REVIEWS

#### Antonio Galloni's Vinous

"The 2014 Syrah (Santa Barbara County) is a superb appellation-level wine from Ojai. Black pepper, lavender, menthol, licorice, cloves and sage abound in a deep, fleshy wine bursting at the seams with character and personality. Expressive blue and purplish-hued fruits and grippy tannins leave a lasting impression." - AG 92 Points

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