

# 2015 SYRAH Special Bottling

SOLOMON HILLS

SANTA MARIA VALLEY

Solomon Hills Syrah is always a special bottling, and for good reason: this teensy half-acre block of Syrah was planted as an experiment, to see if Syrah would even ripen in such a chilly coastal vineyard. This block (called "Pixie" block by the Millers, perhaps out of affection for the Ojai fruit, perhaps because of its diminutive scale) goes only to us and provides only two to four barrels of something that's utterly singular each year.

This wine has loads to say about the 2015 vintage, which was an interesting one because it was a peak drought year where the fruit came in 2-4 weeks early. On face value that isn't ideal. The key fact is that Syrah's veraison (the period of grape ripening and coloring) was not short because of warm weather in 2015, it actually was very long—120 days at Solomon Hills. The warm February of 2015 made for early budbreak, so the growing season was long as ever in Santa Maria Valley.

That's manifest in this wine, which shows power and stacked depth that is mind bending when considering the 12 percent alcohol. With the already long veraison Adam decided this wine would be plenty dense without more sugar ripeness, and the outcome is stunning. Deep spicy berry flavors frame a wine full of that bacon-y richness of perfectly cured Castelvetro olives. The texture is fatty and mouth coating with just enough acidity to drive it forward and refresh. You'll be content to just let your nose hover over this Syrah; fragrances of sandalwood, sticky herbs, clay and pepper make the mind wander.

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**BLEND** 100% Syrah

**AVA** Santa Maria Valley

**ALCOHOL** 13.0%

**VINIFICATION** 12% New French Oak

**BARREL AGING** 18 Months

**TOTAL PRODUCTION** 114 Cases

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## PRESS REVIEWS

### Jeb Dunnuck

First made in 2008, the 2015 Syrah Solomon Hills Special Bottlings comes from the only Syrah vines planted in the Solomon Hills Vineyard (it's a very cold site for Syrah) and was mostly destemmed and brought up in neutral barrels. This beauty boasts a big perfume of mulberries, cherries, leafy herbs, pepper, and green olives, and I wrote in my notes that it reminded me of a Côte Rôtie from Jamet. Gamey, exotic, medium-bodied, incredibly elegant, and seamless, it's not for those craving big California fruit but is a gorgeously complex, multi-dimensional Syrah that will drink nicely for a decade or more. " Jeb Dunnuck **95 Points**

### Antonio Galloni's Vinous

"The 2015 Syrah Solomon Hills Special Bottling is a two barrel lot from a half-acre parcel. Rich, deep and expansive, the 2015 possesses magnificent textural intensity and unctuousness, both of which belie the 12% alcohol on the label. Whole clusters add considerable aromatic nuance, but the long hang time of 120 days most likely explains the wine's sublime balance and sense of proportion. Hints of game, smoke, tobacco and wild herbs build into the powerful, explosive finish. I would consider cellaring the 2015 for at least a few years, as it has tremendous potential" - Antonio Galloni

### 93+ Points

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