



2004 Syrah “Central Coast”

This wine is 96% Syrah and 4% Grenache. It is a blend of 14 different vineyards: 55% from Santa Barbara County; 43% from Paso Robles and 2% from the Arroyo Grande Valley. The largest vineyard components, in order, are: Bien Nacido – Santa Maria; Lonesome Oak and French Camp – Paso Robles; Chalbot – Santa Barbara County near Los Alamos; and Vogelzang – Santa Ynez Valley.

The various lots were fermented separately. The majority of the lots were racked and blended together in January '05 with the other components added at the second racking in June. Aging was done in mostly neutral French oak barrels for 10 to 11 months. It was lightly fined with egg whites and given a polish filtration before bottling in August 2005. Believe it or not we made 15,400 cases!

2004 was a weird vintage. We had an unprecedented two-week heat wave in early September and all of our Paso Robles and a lot of our Santa Ynez fruit ripened at once. Some how we got it all in, with sugar numbers all over the board. Luckily it cooled down in the second half of September and we could bring our cool-climate Syrah vineyards in with good acidity and balanced alcohols.

This is a racier, spicier wine than the 2003 with a more “fruit forward” character; in fact, it reminds me a lot of the 2001. The alcohol just fell under the 14% mark at 13.95% - sometimes you get lucky!