



2003 SYRAH “PURISIMA MOUNTAIN”

This wine is 100% Syrah for the Purisima Mountain Vineyard in the Santa Ynez Valley; located in the hills just west of the town of Los Olivos (it's actually contiguous to Stolpman Vineyard). The vineyard is owned by the Beckmen family and has risen in the ranks among Santa Barbara County vineyards for quality, not just for Syrah, but for Grenache and other Rhone varietals as well.

Grapes for this wine were harvested on September 22 at a beautiful 24.2° brix, 3.61 pH and 6.9 grams acidity. We used our traditional winemaking techniques (see just about any other Syrah we make), including aging for 16 months in François Frères barrels (25% new). For this wine I selected 6 barrels, but then Sam's in Chicago bought 3 of them (I should have set aside more). The three remaining barrels, 72 cases, were bottled in February 2005 without fining or filtering.

This is the most elegant and restrained of our 2003 single vineyard Syrahs, and yet it's hardly elegant or restrained. This vineyard evokes a definite terroir in the aromas of ripe berries, perfume and spice. Like most of the '03's it's a pretty juicy wine with lifted, almost sweet fruit characters. The tannins are evident but fairly soft already. Drink this over the next few years and wait for the wonderful 2001 and 2002 bottlings from Purisima to come around.