

Proprietor Blended
SPECIAL CUVÉE

Elizabeth Spencer

SYRAH
SONOMA COAST

Vintage 2003

20 Barrels

Wined & Bottled by Elizabeth Spencer Wines

APPELLATION: SONOMA COAST
VARITETAL BLEND: 100% SYRAH
CLONE: SYRAH NOIR
GRAPE YIELD: 2.9 TONS PER ACRE
BARRELS: 20% NEW, 80%- 2 YEAR-OLD FRENCH OAK
PRODUCTION: 430 CASES
WINEMAKER: SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: FALL 2005

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Aromas of fresh cranberry, black plum, hints of barrel char and nutmeg with an overlay of cherry blossoms. Flavors of green peppercorn, white pepper and dark purple fruit fold into solid tannins. Notes of toffee extend into the long finish. Has the potential to age and showing very well at present.

VINEYARDS

The south-facing hillside vineyards are located north of San Pablo Bay on Lakeville Highway outside the town of Petaluma. Cooling influences from the nearby Bay converge with those from the Pacific Coast to create a very cool microclimate, ideal for Syrah.

WINEMAKING

The Syrah grapes were picked early in the cool early morning on October 19th at average yields of 2.9 tons per acre. Fermentation was done in small, open-top fermenters using de-stemmed berries and whole clusters. The wine was aged for just over 18 months in small French oak barrels with 80% previously filled oak and 20% new barrels prior to bottling in April, 2005. A total of 20 barrels were produced.

VINTAGE

Although a challenging growing season, 2003 ultimately provided excellent fruit. The winter was quite mild with normal rainfall and was followed by an unusually cold and damp spring. Sporadic heat spells in early summer impacted bloom and set making the naturally light crop, lighter. A rainstorm in late August was followed by warm weather. Then a heat spike in the second week in September helped to speed up and intensify the ripening process. Fog returned for a few days followed by another heat spike. Our Syrah did very well in this late season heat which was followed by a two week period of moderate temperatures causing the grapes to mature with perfect "hang time" allowing complex flavors and color to develop. This late summer weather was an ideal completion to a demanding growing season, and consequently, the vines produced a small crop of concentrated fruit.

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