



BELL

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Syrah 1997 Canterbury Vineyard Sierra Foothills

In 1997 we produced our first Syrah from Ian and Elena Renner's Canterbury Vineyard at the 2,200 foot elevation in the Sierra Foothills. Uniquely situated on a peninsula surrounded on three sides by the large New Mellones Dam, the vineyard enjoys a microclimate with warm sunny days, no fog, and moderated by cool afternoon breezes off the dam. Well drained soils with a shallow layer of schist restricts root growth, resulting in vines yielding intensely flavored fruit.

Vinification

Syrah grapes were hand-harvested and delivered to the winery in small picking boxes to minimize fruit damage. Grapes were gently crushed to minimize crushing of berries and maximize fruit character. We fermented at 85 degrees-F with a Syrah yeast strain, and extracted color utilizing gentle irrigation over the skins. Following fermentation the wine underwent malo-lactic fermentation and was then racked to barrel. The wine was barrel aged in a combination of French and American oak barrels for 19 months. Forty percent of the cooperage were new barrels. The wine was not fined and received one filtration prior to bottling. The resulting blend received six months of bottle age prior to release.

Tasting Notes:

Our 1997 Syrah exhibits wonderful varietal character. Dark ruby in color with intense spicy and plummy fruit aromas, the wine has a rich, luscious mouthfeel and soft, elegant tannins. The oak flavors are in balance with the fruit acidity and fruit flavors to yield an appealing wine with great depth and concentration. This wine is destined to become the Merlot alternative for those seeking rich, round, well-balanced yet softer style wines. This wine will continue to age gracefully for many years.

Technical Analysis:

Varietal	Syrah, 100%
Source	Canterbury Vineyard, Vallecitos, Sierra Foothills
Harvest Sugar	23.8 Brix
Harvest Acid	0.48 gm/100ml
Total Acid	0.64 gm/100ml
pH	3.79
Alcohol	13.8%
Aging	19 months in French and American Oak (40% new)
Bottle Date	May 1999
Production	289 Cases