



Mendocino County – McDowell Valley
2003 SYRAH

Harvest Notes:

It was a fabulous year for Syrah, yielding fruit with even ripeness, good maturity and complexity. The majority of grapes for this Reserve Syrah are harvested by hand from 59-year old, head-pruned vines that we call "The Gibson Ranch". This block, originally planted in 1919, produces grapes with intensity and complexity as it consists of three different clones of Syrah, each with their own flavor profile. The other portion of grapes comes from the Alden Ranch "Potato Patch" vineyard. Surrounded by a sea of forest and within sight of the Pacific Ocean this small vineyard got its name from the Italian immigrants who came to this spot to grow their potatoes. Vines endure winters delivering on average 100+ inches of rain, periodic snow flurries, and some of the strongest winds imaginable. Coastal influence moderates summer heat keeping days cooler than inland valleys on extremely hot days and warmer on cool days. The vines in this challenging environment produce a precious yield of one-ton per acre.

Vinification

De-stemmed, crushed Syrah berries were cold-soaked for 3-5 days to impart maximum color without aggressive tannins. Two different lots of Syrah make up our 2003 Syrah, one of which underwent extended maceration of 4-5 weeks. The extended maceration imparts a rich mouth feel, a leathery note on the palate. The wine Received eighteen months aging in 2-year old medium-toast Radoux French and American oak barrels.

Tasting Notes

Typical of McDowell Syrah, this wine is dense, concentrated and very rich. The estate fruit shows plum, blueberry and chocolate with a vein of sweet anise that is typical of McDowell old vine fruit. The Alden vineyards delivers aromas of violets and rose petal, with a palette of black current, smoke, and very firm tannins. The combined blend results in a wine with layered flavors of fruit and spice that is at once luscious and well structured.

Technical Notes

Varietal Composition	95% Syrah, 5% Durif (Petite Sirah)
Vineyard Location	60% McDowell Valley, California 40% Alden Ranch, Mendocino Ridge, California
Harvest Date	October 22 nd , 2003
Analysis:	Alcohol 15.0%
	Residual Sugar < 0.20
	Total Acid 0.67 g/100ml
	pH 3.84
Barrel Type	2+ year-old French & American oak
Bottling Date	July 7th, 2005
Barrel time	16 months
Total Case Production	1,500 cases
Suggested Retail	\$25.00

for additional information:

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