

2004 SYRAH

Hillside Reserve



WINEMAKER'S NOTES

"I can describe this wine in one word... BIG. It is inky dark and has a mouthful of lush textured tannins that point to a long life in the bottle. If served soon after release, I suggest an aerated decanting to help coax out the hidden aromas. It has aromas and flavors of black cherries and blackberries and a spicy-oaky-smokiness from the indulgent oak ageing. Be forewarned that this wine is not for the faint of heart. It will, however, soften with time, so perhaps it is rather for the patient few. I will let you decide."

Andrew Murray Vineyards is dedicated exclusively to crafting wines from Rhône varieties. This narrow focus, combined with great vineyard partners that feature rocky, well-drained soils, and very cool microclimates especially well suited for growing great Syrah, make for a fantastic setting in which to craft world class wines, possessing immense richness, maturity, and drinkability. This focus is further defined and refined by our "minimalistic handling" approach to winemaking.

All of our wines are hand-picked and "hand-sorted" in the vineyard with an eye for only picking the best fruit. We take this one step further when we select the harvest for the "Hillside Reserve" program. These grapes came from a single hillside block that has through time shown itself to be very special and worthy of the "Reserve" designation. In the 2003 vintage, we were able to harvest an average of 1.0 tons/acre of Syrah from the "Reserve Block." The small-berried grapes were hand harvested in the cool, foggy mornings of late October. Then the fruit was gently destemmed back into the same picking bins. We then use gravity to transfer the newly destemmed grapes to our open-top fermenters. Fermentation was allowed to start "spontaneously" with the indigenous yeast present from the vineyard. All the while, we punched down the cap 3-4 times per day, depending upon the stage of fermentation. The new wine was carefully transferred to new and 2-3 year old barrels for the completion of fermentation and ageing. The wine rested in barrel for about 9 months before 10 barrels were selected as the "best." These were then combined and transferred back to the newest of the barrels for an additional 11 months of ageing.

WINE FACTS

Composition:

100% Syrah from a single block

Appellation:

Santa Ynez Valley

Soil:

Well-drained, gravelly, rocky, sandy-loam

Aspect:

North facing slope to 30°

Elevation:

1200 - 1500 feet

Fermentation:

Open Top, Punch Down

Aged 20 months in French Oak,
20% New

250 cases produced

Release Date:

November 2005

Alcohol:
15.1%

pH:
3.75

TA:
6.5 g/L