



HILL FAMILY E S T A T E



2008 Clarke Vineyard Syrah

Production: 474 cases

Composition: Syrah 96.7%, Viognier 3.3%

Vineyards: Syrah from Clarke Vineyard, American Canyon, Viognier from Alexander Valley

Cooperage: 12 months in oak barrels, 70% new oak (33% in new American oak Radoux Appalachian and Seguin Moreau Tennessee oak, 37% in new French oak (Francois Freres, Remond, and Saury), and remainder in older French bbls

Alcohol: 15.2% alc, 3.68 pH, 0.62 TA

The Clarke Vineyard in American Canyon has a cool breezy climate that brings out the depth and finesse of the Syrah grape. Using mostly Clone 877, and a little Clone 383 gives grace and complexity to a powerhouse Syrah. A small amount of Viognier was co-fermented with the Syrah to add exotic appeal. 2008 was not an easy year, with early frost and hot spells at frequent intervals. In an area like American Canyon, where even in a hot spell it is still only 92 degrees, the year just gave us the concentration so important in Syrah about a week earlier than usual.

Tasting notes:

Nose: Ripe dark cherry and plum fruit with an exotic spicy white pepper and lily topnote. Deep underlying serious toasted oak and black licorice.

Palate: very deep, spicy and rich, almost silky, smoky dark chocolate and plum jam flavors that come alive on the palate. Young and serious, but tannins are polished and rich enough to drink now with spicy food or rare meats.