



HILL FAMILY
E S T A T E

2010 "Clarke Vineyard" Syrah

Production: 512 cases

Composition: 97% Syrah and 3% Viognier

Vineyards: Clarke Vineyard and Hoot Owl

Appellations: Napa Valley (American Canyon) and Alexander Valley

Cooperage: 13 months in 40% new oak (16% in new American oak Radoux Appalachian, 24% new French oak). The rest was in neutral barrels.

Alcohol: 14.8% alc, 3.84 pH, 0.59 TA

Release date: June 2012

Release price: \$38.00

The Clarke Vineyard in American Canyon has a cool breezy climate that brings out the depth and finesse of the Syrah grape. Clone 877 is used for body and chocolate tones, while a little Clone 383 is used for grace and complexity. A small amount of Viognier was co-fermented with the Syrah to add exotic appeal. 2010 was a cool year, with late rains and cool temperatures throughout the summer. In an area like American Canyon, where even in a hot spell it is still only 92 degrees, it was tough to get concentration, so when it rained 0.25" on Oct 17th, it was a little scary. Careful management and tight standards at picking on Oct 23 did give us over 25 Brix, and we picked very early in the morning so that the grapes were sitting under the roof at the winery when the rains began again that afternoon. We gave the Syrah a 3-day cold soak and inoculated with Pasteur Red yeast, and let the temperature get up in the mid-80s during fermentation. All sorts of rich exotic aromas came out to let us know this was going to be another wonderful Syrah.

Winemaker Alison Doran's Tasting notes:

This rich, seductive Syrah offers supple tiers of boysenberry, vanilla raspberry cream soda and black cherry jam, all leading to a very complex finish, where tannins give the flavors traction.