



Marelle 2004 Peay Vineyard Sonoma Coast Syrah

GRAPES

Peay Vineyard is a really cool place. It's located a few miles inland from the ocean in the northwestern corner of the Sonoma Coast appellation. In the coolest growing seasons, Syrah barely ripens at Peay. The benefit of growing Syrah at the climatic limit of suitable sites is that the grapes retain their turgor and vibrant flavors while tannins ripen. Which clone of Syrah? The Marelle block is the Estrella River selection on 110R. When the grapes arrive, no one can resist repeat tastings because they are reminiscent of finished Côte Rôtie. Fortunately, this charm is retained all the way to the bottle.

VINIFICATION

Dawn-harvested clusters were partially destemmed to open top fermenters. Cold soak, punchdowns and fermentation ensued. A few days after dryness, the lot was membrane pressed (without rolling) to French oak barrels (25% new) where it aged sur lies until blending. The wine was bottled unfiltered.

TECHNICAL DATA

Harvest date	27 September 2004
Composition	100% Peay Vineyard Sonoma Coast Syrah
Total acidity	6.3 g/L
pH at bottling	3.67
Alcohol	14.5
Residual sugar	0.4 g/L (0.04%) dry
Maturation	18 months in French oak (25% new)
Bottling date	4 April 2006

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The early 2004 growing season provided plenty of sunshine. Typically Peay Syrah is picked in late October or early November, but in 2004 it was picked in late September! So, what is Peay Syrah like with more sun and ripeness? It has more blue fruit and more volume to accompany its moderate alcohol, complex floral aromas and red fruit layers. Plums, cassis, dark cherry and blue fruits. Roses, violets, hyacinth, spice-laced citrus peel. Optimally ripe tannins are responsible for the compelling mouthfeel which is fat upfront, mouthfilling on the mid-palate and pleasantly persistent on the soft finish. Integrated and generous at release, the wine will maintain its vibrant fruit and sweet tannins until 2010-2011 or later.

Winemaker: Ashley Heisey