



2005 SYRAH

THOMPSON
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

395 CASES PRODUCED

Traditionally our most burly syrah, Thompson is the slowest of our wines to evolve. Since 2002, we have added a bit of grenache and/or mourvedre to add to the complexity of flavors and to make this wine a little less monolithic. The results have not been dramatic, as the wine is still a monster, but it is now friendlier in its youth.

In 2005 we took another step towards better balance and began fermenting the Thompson in a different way. We are attempting to extract more of the flavors from the grape skins earlier in the fermentation. As a result, we are now mixing the grapes (punching down) more frequently prior to and at the start of fermentation, and doing less after the midpoint. The theory is that, as the wine ferments and gains in alcohol, that alcohol extracts harsh tannins from the grape skins, so extracting the flavors early gives more fruitiness and less bite. I have a customer who was quite concerned that these changes would transform the hearty wine that Thompson is into something meek. Quite the contrary, this wine is mouth-coating and dense, showing beautiful aromatic purity. While it is enticing today, ideally this syrah should be cellared for another 7-10 years, allowing all its potential to be realized.

90% Syrah, 5% Grenache, 5% Mourvedre (Thompson Vineyard)

PRESS REVIEWS

Robert Parkers Wine Advocate

"The 2005 Syrah Thompson Vineyard is a powerfully concentrated, full-bodied wine oozing with blackberry fruit intermixed with smoky, burning ember, tobacco leaf, charcoal, and spice box notes. It possesses fabulous fruit as well as intensity, and finishes with abundant glycerin and depth. Its 15.3% natural alcohol is well-concealed by a cascade of fruit and glycerin." - RP **93 Points**

Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Celler

"Inky purple. Exotically perfumed bouquet offers spicy raspberry and blackberry scents, along with notes of violet and black olive. Classic syrah on the nose and the palate, with sweet red berry and spice flavors gaining weight and richness with air. Juicy, focused and gently chewy on the long, penetrating finish, which leaves an exotic apricot pit note behind." - JR **92 Points**

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