

# 2008 Syrah | Melville Vineyard, Santa Rita Hills



Winemaker  
Adam Tolmach



Blend: 100% Syrah  
Vineyard: Melville  
AVA: Santa Rita Hills  
Alcohol: 14.5%  
Vinification: 20% New French Oak  
Barrel Aging: 16 Months  
Total Production: 216 Cases



THE  
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VINEYARD

## Winemaker's Notes

2008 was a watershed year for us in our efforts to produce more balanced wines. A huge part of our success was that the vintage was so beneficent. The weather was moderate and mild so we had the leisure to harvest at the moment the fruit was just right. Simultaneously, many of our ideas of how to tweak the winemaking process to achieve our goal had jelled, so things went fine in the winery as well.

Melville's Santa Rita Hills vineyard site is situated in the cool Santa Rita Hills area, and the climate has a profound effect on the character of this wine. There are peppery, spicy and floral notes that you never see in syrahs from warmer vineyards. We use some of our edgiest winemaking techniques with this wine; the raw material demands it, and its potential would not be realized if we used more conventional methods. And, while we are big fans of low yields in the vineyard, in this case we had no choice - we couldn't consistently ripen the syrah here unless we kept the crop small. As it is harvest rarely occurs before the last week of October.

Melville is exotic; it is the one that gets all the attention because it has so much upfront appeal. The aroma of this wine is so compelling, and the flavors so rich, that it is hard to ignore.

## Press Reviews

Robert Parkers's Wine Advocate

"The 2008 Syrah Melville is loaded with character and personality. Dark plums, tapenade and spices are some of the many notes that are woven together in this intense, varietally expressive Syrah. At four years of age, the 2008 is still an infant." - AG

92

Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar

"Bright purple. A heady bouquet displays fresh red fruits, candied flowers, lavender and Asian spices. Velvety and gently sweet, offering intense black raspberry and cherry flavors along with cola and spicecake nuances. A kick of black pepper adds lift to the pliant, persistent finish, which features darker berry and smoke qualities. Owing to its appealingly elegant character, this is delicious right now." - JR

92

The Wine Spectator

"Combines ripe, grapey plum and wild berry character with a touch of meatiness, turning spicy and ending with a crushed rock and hot brick edge." - JL

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