



ampelos cellars

2016 sta. rita hills "gamma" syrah

certified sustainability in practice, organic, and biodynamic



harvest

- our syrah harvest started on september 28 with clone 470 and completed a week later with the Estrella river clone. the chilly summer prolonged the ripening of the flavors and allowed us to pick syrah relatively late – the weather cooperated and the grapes were in good shape when they arrived at the winery– flavors, color, tannins, acids and structure was balanced and ready
- crop levels were at 3.5 ton per acre – a good beginning
- brix ranged from 22.5 to 23.5, pH between 3.51 and 3.63. low sugar, great acids and combined with the characteristics described below it is truly amazing the balance we can get from santa rita hills!

wine making style

- the fruit spent the night in a cold room to drop the temperature
- the grapes were de-stemmed into small 1½ ton open top fermenters. peter likes to taste the stems when we destem to decide if he wants to include them. we decided not to include any stems this year
- cold soaked for 5-9 days after which the natural, wild fermentation kicked in. all native yeast fermentation
- fermentation finished in 8-9 days with 2 daily punch downs
- after 7-8 days of extended maceration we drained the free-run (~80%) and gave the remainder a gentle press
- the wine was then racked into oak barrels allowing the natural, wild malolactic bacteria to begin the secondary fermentation
- the wine was not racked but spent almost 3 years barrel aging – it is unfinned and unfiltered

character

- syrah, our 'black beauty' of the Sta. Rita Hills never fails to deliver a dark rich garnet hue filled with a back palate of earth and spice that makes a statement
- with the cool temperatures and ocean fog that we receive, our syrah clusters have a very long hang time. this weather and slow maturation process give gamma balanced notes of white cracked pepper, earthy blueberry, floral notes and Indian spice.
- a kick of chocolate cherries and slate minerality bring finish to this great ride.

appellation	sta. rita hills
composition	100% estate: 34% clone estrella, 62% clone 470 and 4% viognier. 18% stem inclusion
vineyard source	ampelos vineyard
alcohol	14.2%
pH /acid	3.66 / 6.49
barrel aging	33 months

oak profile

18% new oak: one french barrel and one hybrid barrel with american staves and french heads. the rest is neutral oak