



R H O N E S E R I E S



2016 MADONNE
ESTATE

<i>Appellation</i>	SANTA CLARA VALLEY
<i>Vineyard</i>	SARAH'S ESTATE
<i>Growers</i>	TIM SLATER
<i>Cepage</i>	GRENACHE, SYRAH, MOURVÈDRE, COUNOISE
<i>Winemaker</i>	TIM SLATER
<i>Alcohol</i>	14.1%
<i>Cooperage</i>	NEUTRAL FRENCH OAK, 20 MONTH AGING
<i>Production</i>	512 CASES

The Sarah's Vineyard Madonna is our local effort to emulate the traditional red wines of the southern Rhone Valley. It is a blend of estate grown, Rhone red varieties – in this case, primarily Grenache.

Our estate vineyards bridge the historic Santa Clara Valley and the cooler climate “Mt. Madonna” district of the southern Santa Cruz Mountains. Here fog and winds from nearby Monterey Bay dramatically cool down the estate, extending the growing season and providing unique conditions for complex Rhone cultivars.

The 2016 vintage was the first to see substantial winter rains following the long drought in California. Our vineyard team worked hard to control vigor and focus the vines' energy on fruit production. With no early fall precipitation, we were able to let the fruit hang for full phenolic ripeness and balanced flavors and acidity. We hand-harvested the fruit during the last week of September and the first week of October that year.

After destemming the whole berries, we fermented at low temperatures in small lot vats. Hand punch downs were used prior to pressing to French oak barrels for twenty months aging in primarily neutral cooperage to preserve the exceptional, complex fruit. The final blend of 65% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 11% Mourvèdre, and 4% Counoise was bottled in late March of 2018.

The '16 Madonna reflects its Southern Rhone heritage: it displays a vast fruit presence of cherry and cranberry on the nose; notes of dried flowers, black licorice, and cocoa powder are also present. The palate showcases raspberry, tea leaf, and violet components with savory notes of pepper, oregano, and thyme on the long finish. Pair with lamb skewer appetizers or roasted cauliflower with stewed vegetables.