



T A S T I N G R O O M S E R I E S

2016 SYRAH
 BESSON VINEYARD

<i>Appellation</i>	SANTA CLARA VALLEY
<i>Vineyard</i>	BESSON VINEYARD
<i>Grower</i>	GEORGE BESSON, JR.
<i>Winemaker</i>	TIM SLATER
<i>Alcohol</i>	13.9%
<i>Cooperage</i>	FRENCH OAK, 20% NEW, 20 MONTHS
<i>Production</i>	216 CASES

The 2016 Sarah's Vineyard Syrah is based on the noble variety of France's Northern Rhone, responsible worldwide for classic reds. From French Hermitage to Australian Shiraz, Syrah is one of the most popular and widely-planted red wine grapes.

The Syrah for our 2016 release came from our good friend George Besson, Jr.'s old vineyard, just 300 yards to the east of Sarah's. This historic property was originally planted in 1922. George's and our estates 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 vineyards, extending the growing season and providing unique conditions for complex Rhone cultivars.

The 2016 vintage saw the end of the long drought on the Central Coast. We hand harvested and destemmed the whole Syrah berries directly into the fermentor. We "cold soaked" at 55 F degrees until the onset of a robust, native fermentation. We then inoculated with commercial yeast and fermented to a peak temperature of 90 F degrees. Punch downs of the cap were done by hand, three times a day. One hundred percent secondary malolactic fermentation was induced. All these careful techniques had the aim of maintaining the superb fruit and spice aromas and flavors. The wine was aged for 20 months in French oak barrels, 20% being new wood.

Tim's tasting notes: "The nose displays fresh blackberries, boysenberry, plum sauce, violets, and a typical touch of white pepper. The palate echoes the fruit aromas with the addition of a bit of bacon and cinnamon. Should be sensational with grilled meats or herbed-lamb."

