



V I N E Y A R D D E S I G N A T E



2018 **SYRAH**
BESSON VINEYARD
SANTA CLARA VALLEY

<i>Appellation</i>	SANTA CLARA VALLEY
<i>Vineyard</i>	BESSON
<i>Grower</i>	GEORGE BESSON, JR
<i>Clones</i>	VARIOUS
<i>Winemaker</i>	TIM SLATER
<i>Alcohol</i>	14.2%
<i>Cooperage</i>	FRENCH OAK, 20% NEW, 20 MONTHS
<i>Production</i>	320 CASES

The 2018 Sarah's Vineyard Syrah is based on this 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 2018 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.

For the 2018 vintage, we hand-picked and destemmed the whole Syrah berries from Besson directly into the fermenter. We "cold soaked" at 55 degrees until the onset of a robust, native fermentation. We then inoculated with commercial yeast and fermented to a peak temperature of 90 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.

On the nose the '18 Syrah is full of rich dark fruit and leather. In the glass this opens up with blackberry, dark cherry, and plum fruit flavors along with tobacco, clove, spice, and a hint of leather. This is a wine that evolves quite a bit as it opens up. The '18 Syrah pairs perfectly with Rosemary Lamb Shanks and Saffron Brown Rice.