

2016 "Phoenix Ranch" Syrah

Vineyard Notes:

The Phoenix Ranch vineyard is on Atlas Peak Road, just north of the Whetstone tasting salon in Napa and is biodynamically farmed. The key here: a cool spot in a warm climate. Most of Napa Valley gets downright hot during the summer, but at the southern end of the valley the San Pablo Bay makes its presence felt.

The cold air that scoots off the Pacific and spills into the lower sections of Atlas Peak extends the growing season by as much as 3 weeks as compared to farther up valley.

The soils are dark brown, loamy with pockets of clay and very well drained. Parts of the vineyard have been historically prone to frost both in late spring and again in mid to late October.

Naturally low yielding and late ripening, it's perfect for what I am looking for in Syrah. Since the Northern Rhone palate is where I want to be, the pepperiness from prolonged hang time coupled with Estrella, Durrell, & Syrah Noir clones make for an honest shot at mimicking my French brethren. I generally ferment north of 60% whole cluster and age for 30 months in neutral French oak barrels. And apparently it turned out alright since Michelle likes to joke that this is the wine she married Jamey for...

The 2016 season had a dry winter, long, cold spring and very late set, mild summer heat and below normal yields.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes:

Stainless steel fermented, aged for 28 months sur lees in neutral French oak barrels. Dark purple in color. Really (really) big nose full of ripe cassis, black licorice, violets and white pepper. Secondary aromas of bacon fat, bay leaf, and garrigue. Intense flavors of cassis and brambleberry, with hints of baker's chocolate, white pepper, and tobacco. Finishes long with velvety tannins and lively acidity.

Production:

254 Cases

Alcohol:

15.6%

Date Harvested:

September 23rd

