



2007 SYRAH “IDENTITY CRISIS”

Santa Barbara County

Winemaker's Notes:

This wine is having a bit of a meltdown. It doesn't quite know what it should be. It's a Syrah, but obviously, it's not red. It's not really a rosé wine either. For starters, it's not really pink. And it doesn't exude pink-wine fruit; at least certainly not like 2005's *Big Fat Pink Shiraz* that we made from Syrah. There's no fun label with Pokka dots indicating that it's a simple, quaffable cuvee. No, it's much more shy than all that.

Hmmmm. Remember that hideous genera in winemaking that took off about 20 years ago in response to the glut of Zinfandel that was out there? White Zin it was called. The wines were (and still are) sterile, bleached out and sweet. If they had any fruitiness, it was largely due to blending in something aromatic, like Muscat. A couple of the bigger wineries got real good at making them devoid of all color. Oh my gosh! Is this wine a *White Syrah*!?

Well, not really; it's kind of a coppery color, and it's bone dry. To make matters even more confusing, it went through a malolactic fermentation. As a result, it has these buttery tones laced into its delicate, perplexing fruit, which smells like a cross between nectarine and cinnamon. It's very pretty, but from a Syrah?

You know, it looks like a Blanc de Noir, a Champagne or sparkling wine made from Pinot Noir . . . except . . . there's no bubbles. My Australian buddies can't figure out why I don't call it Shiraz. Until they look at it, and then they don't know what it is.

I had a buddy in college. He was at McGeorge in Sacramento studying law while I was at Davis studying wine. We'd get together once a week or so and we would both study alcoholic beverages of some sort, but when it came to wine, he would say to me, “Why don't you stop thinking about it and just drink it?”

I think with this wine I'll do just that.

Cheers,
Bryan

Technical Notes:

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

100% Syrah, Estelle Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

VINIFICATION:

100% Barrel Fermentation; 17% New French Oak

100% Malolactic Fermentation

pH: 3.54; TA: 5.8 g/L; RESIDUAL SUGAR: Dry; ALCOHOL BY VOL.: 13 %

BOTTLING DATE: April 3, 2008

RELEASE DATE: April 17, 2008

PRODUCTION: 140 cases 12/750ml

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$20.00