



2016 Black Bear Block Syrah

Estate Grown and Bottled, Santa Ynez Valley

Vineyard:	Zaca Mesa Vineyards: Black Bear Block (Mesa H)
Composition:	100% Syrah
Harvest:	September 16, 2016
Cooperage:	21 months in French oak, 40% new
Bottled:	July 24, 2018
TA pH:	0.624 g/100ml 3.56
Alcohol:	14.2%
Production:	215 cases

Winery History

Our wines are made from sustainably farmed grapes that are estate grown, produced and bottled. With over 40 years of grape growing experience in the Santa Ynez Valley, our winemaking and vineyard teams meticulously farm our vineyard to focus on terroir-driven wines. We began growing Rhône varieties in 1978 when we were the first to plant Syrah in Santa Barbara County. Since then, we have determined that grape varieties planted in the Rhône Valley of France are best suited to our estate.

Our Estate

Situated less than 30 miles from the Pacific Ocean, our vineyard is composed mainly of Chamise soils. These are shallow, well-drained soils that developed over gravelly beds of silt, clay, diatomaceous shale and other sandy water-deposited materials. These soils are found on dissected terraces and eroded hillsides with elevations between 1300 and 1500 feet above sea level. This high elevation combined with cool ocean breezes allow our grapes to retain their natural acidity. Since 1997, the winery has replanted more than half of its original vines with high-density plantings of Rhône varieties, with new rootstock and clone combinations.

Growing Season and Harvest

2016 took a step back towards normal after two of our warmest vintages and earliest harvests on record. An early bud-break in March started the year ahead of schedule, but spring temperatures were generally average. Early summer saw a return to the heat, but Mother Nature quickly hit the brakes in August and September allowing the vines to slow their accumulation of sugar and loss of acidity.

Winemaking

After hand harvesting, the grapes were placed into a 5-ton open top tank to ferment. During fermentation, the skins were punched-down twice a day, for gentle extraction of tannins. After three-weeks on the skins, the wine was then pressed into French oak barrels and aged on its fine lees for 21 months.

The Wine

The Black Bear Block is a 3 ½ acre block planted on its own roots in 1978. Named in tribute to the black bears that live around our vineyard, the Black Bear Block was the first Syrah vineyard planted in Santa Barbara County and is now the oldest remaining Syrah vineyard on the Central Coast.

This 2016 Black Bear Block Syrah has a charming bouquet, intense with black raspberry, plum, star anise and charred sage. The more subtle notes of crushed violets and cured meats evolve as the wine breathes.



Zaca Mesa

The silky tannins are wrapped beautifully in red fruit flavors and mineral notes that extend the graceful palate.

Eric, Kristin, Agustin, Ruben, Jose, Angel, Randy & Ramirez
Winemaking and Vineyard team