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Petite Sirah 2007

Massa Ranch

Yountville

Background

There is nothing petite about Petite Sirah. This black grape, grown throughout the warmer regions of California, produces teeth-staining, brawny wines with dark berry and plum fruit, a grind of spice (usually black pepper) and sturdy tannins. Once considered a rustic wine, California Petite Sirah has become softer and more polished in recent years, as winemakers have learned to tame the tannins and astringency with various techniques in the vineyard and cellar. Petite Sirah -- intentionally misspelled "Petite Syrah" by some producers -- is the same as Durif, a workhorse grape of southern France. Petite Sirah is also related to "regular" Syrah; Syrah is Petite's father, Peloursin the mother. Despite their common genes, Petite Sirah and Syrah are very different wines -- the "petite" son has more muscles and hair on his chest than Dad. -- Source: Linda Murphy, San Francisco Chronicle, January 2006

Vinification

Our Petite Sirah grapes are grown on our neighbor's vineyard in Yountville approximately one mile south of the Yountville Hills. Grapes were crushed directly to small open top fermentors and punched down several times a day to maximize flavor and color extraction. The wine was pressed to barrel where it underwent malo-lactic fermentation. The wine was aged in 50% new French and American oak barrels for 20 months. The wine was not fined and was gently filtered before bottling. The resulting wine received nine months of bottle age prior to release.

Vintage Notes

The 2007 growing season was a wonderful year for grape growing. Overall, it was very dry and cool. Winter temperatures were warmer than normal into spring resulting in earlier budding, bloom and set in the vineyards across all varieties. Few days in summer topped 100 degrees, with fewer days in the 90s than normal. This meant less irrigation, allowing the grapes to mature naturally and slowly. A brief heat spike around Labor Day added the boost of sugar development that growers were looking for to complement the excellent acid. Harvest commenced in mid-August and was evenly paced. With wines of incredible intensity and concentration, 2007 looks to be the best vintage in many years.

Tasting Notes

The cool Yountville microclimate yields a wine deep in color with black pepper and herb notes on the nose, with ripe flavors of currants and plums, delivering luscious, jammy fruit flavors on the palate. These rich fruit flavors combine with sweet, toasty oak and firm tannins to make this a rich and complex wine that can develop for years to come. Try this wine with rich meat dishes of lamb, pork or game and their hearty sauces.

Technical Analysis:

Varietal:	93% Petite Sirah, 7% Syrah
Source:	Yountville, Napa Valley
Harvest Date:	October 4, 2007
Harvest Sugar	24.1 Brix
Harvest Acid	0.51 gm/100ml
Total Acid	0.67 gm/100ml
pH	3.60
Alcohol	14.8%
Aging	20 months in oak, 50% French
Bottle Date	July 2009
Production	124 cases

