



HILL FAMILY
E S T A T E



2015 “Clarke Vineyard” Syrah

Production: 474 cases

Composition: 97% Syrah and 3% Viognier

Vineyards: Clarke, Losey, Polson Road and Baker

Cooperage: 10 months in oak barrels, 66% new oak (22% in Francois Freres, 22% Tonellerie O Northern Blend American Oak barrels, 22% Stavin French oak) rest in neutral barrels

Alcohol: 15.1% alc, 3.6 pH, 0.65 TA

Bottling date: August 18, 2016

Release date: Spring 2018

Release price: \$49.00

The Clarke Vineyard in American Canyon has a cool breezy climate that brings out the depth and finesse of the Syrah grape. Clone 877 is used for body and raspberry chocolate fruit, and a little Clone 383 for extra color and smoky complexity. A small amount of Viognier was co-fermented with the Syrah to add its exotic appeal. 2015 was a well behaved year in general - but early. The canopy began to give up in late August and there was a lot of wind during the summer, but the small crop was harvested on September 16, at 25.4 Brix and higher than normal acidity. We gave the tank two days of cold soak before adding the VQ51 yeast, and another two days before we warmed it up and let it get going. It went to barrel in late September, and stayed in barrel for 10 months. The wine clarified on its own, so no fining or filtration was necessary at bottling. Big fruit and a soft palate characterize the Syrah from Clarke, though the acidity from 2015 gives it a brighter quality than in some years, it still has the show stealing charm that it casts every time a bottle is opened.

Winemaker Alison Doran’s tasting notes:

Nose) This wine always makes me smile! The aromas have characteristics of vanilla butterscotch with black cherry and black licorice, and just a hint of jasmine.

Palate) The 2015 vintage has a big ripe chewy palate with concentrated black cherry and black currant. There are flavors of vanilla and caramel mixed in the mid palate with black licorice.