

1998
J. LOHR ESTATES
PASO ROBLES, SOUTH RIDGE
SYRAH

VINTAGE

The 1998 vintage will be remembered as “El Niño”. This phenomenon occurs when Pacific Ocean water temperatures off of North America warm substantially, causing extremely wet weather and relatively mild temperatures. This is exactly what we experienced in 1998. The wet and cool weather delayed the onset of budbreak, slowed shoot growth and delayed flowering and fruit set. Harvest was delayed for many appellations until November. Syrah is traditionally an early ripener with flavor development akin to the Central Rhone Valley of France (Tain L’Ermitage) in Paso Robles, but in 1998 we experienced more of a “Northern Rhone” (Cote Rotie) vintage with a longer growing season and later harvest date.

SYRAH

The 1998 vintage of our Syrah was grown on the Nacimiento Los Osos Complex chalky clay soils of our Paso Robles vineyard. The name South Ridge comes from the orientation of the Syrah vineyard sitting on a south-facing hillside. The 1998 vintage comes from two different clones of Syrah; equal components from a French Chapoutier clone grown on its own roots, and the other, an Australian Shiraz 2 clone grown on 1103 Paulsen rootstock. Because of the Syrah vines’ vigorous nature, much care must be taken viticulturally to restrain the vines’ natural tendencies; with early deficit irrigation, vertical shoot positioning and thinning, as well as hedging and leafing of the vine, optimal sunlight exposure is achieved.

TECHNICAL DATA

Origin:	South Ridge, Paso Robles Vineyard
Composition:	100% Syrah
Harvest Date:	October 9 th and 12 th , 1998
Brix at Harvest:	25.1° average
Total Acidity:	0.63 g/100 ml
pH at Bottling:	3.75
Alcohol:	13.7% by volume
Residual Sugar:	Dry
Vinification:	Stainless steel fermented Malolactic fermentation in stainless steel tanks
Maturation:	15 months barrel aging in 15% New Radoux French oak and the balance in second fill Francois Freres French oak Burgundy style barrels.
Bottling Date:	March 2000

WINEMAKER’S COMMENTS

“Deeply colored, youthful, plum red in color, our 1998 South Ridge Syrah has layered aromas of violets and rose with cherries, plum jam and berry fruit with roasted meat, licorice and orange peel. The flavors are full and plump with red fruits, roasted meat and anise. Intensely flavored and extracted, the 1998 Syrah is both a big and soft wine with a balance of fruit, tannin and French oak that makes it an excellent accompaniment to grilled meats with rosemary, fennel and garlic.