

ANTHILL FARMS

2016 Peters Vineyard Syrah

Sebastopol, Sonoma Coast, Sonoma County, CA

2016 Vintage: 2016 was a transition year for the North Coast of California; drought conditions eased up somewhat, but the accompanying warm winter led to an early budbreak, with many vines emerging from dormancy in February. The growing season itself was a welcome return to normal: moderate temperatures prevailed throughout the spring and summer, with few of the punishing heat waves that we saw in 2014 and 2015. Despite the evenness of the weather, the early budbreak led to an equally early and incredibly rushed harvest. The wines are dark in color, very detailed, and refreshing, though with a decidedly mellow, welcoming streak.

Vineyard: Randy Peters farms this vineyard outside of Sebastopol in western Sonoma County. The southern slopes of these hills form the northern edge of the Petaluma Gap, which rushes cool, marine air from the Pacific Ocean inland. These Syrah and interplanted Viognier vines, which Randy put in for us just a more than ten years ago, occupy less than an acre at the lowest edge of this cool, foggy vineyard.

Winery: We harvest the syrah towards the end of the season - around November 1 or after. We vinify 60% whole cluster. We don't inoculate or add enzymes at primary stage and let uncultivated yeasts perform the fermentation while punching down a few times a day. The wine is gently pressed when it has been dry for a few days in the fermenter. At this point, some of the whole berries do release a touch of fresh, carbonically macerated juice - the fermentation is officially completed in barrel. The wine sees only neutral oak. We do not initiate malolactic fermentation, which often will last uninfluenced until the following Spring. We employed a bit of lees stirring at the beginning of elevage but then allowed the wine to uncoil in barrel with periodic topping. Syrahs are bottled close to 18 months post-harvest.

Tasting: The aromas of the Peters are monumental. Violet, lavender, tar with added notes of green peppercorn and baking spices show off in the aromas. Here there is more precision and penetrating flavors. A wine with deep and intense flavors, it remains light on its feet thanks to this cool coastal site's high acids and rounded tannins. Every year Peters Syrah reminds us of the purity and grandness of this site - and Syrah in general in coastal California. Alcohol: 13.7%.

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