Cakebread Cellars



2010 SYRAH NAPA VALLEY

Vineyards

Sixty-two percent of the grapes for our 2010 Syrah came from our Suscol Springs estate vineyard in southern Napa Valley, with the balance from two other cool-climate Napa Valley vineyards. At Suscol Springs, we have six high-quality clones of Syrah, most originating in France's northern Rhône Valley. Like the northern Rhône, our southern Napa vineyards feature a cool, windy climate that fosters the rich, earthy, spicy flavors for which Syrah is renowned. In 2010, we included 3% Grenache – from two outstanding French clones grown at Suscol Springs – in the blend to magnify the wine's lush fruit character.

Vintage 2010

2010 was the latest in a string of cool growing seasons in Napa Valley. The year began with plentiful rainfall, which delayed bud break, flowering and grape set by several weeks. After an unusually cool summer, heat spikes in late August kick-started full ripening. Cooler weather returned in early September, allowing us to harvest our Syrah grapes between September 24th and October 7th with a perfect balance of sugar and acidity.

Winemaking

We harvest each of our Syrah clones separately and ferment them in small open-top fermenters. Prior to fermentation, we cold soak the must for four to six days to maximize color extraction and soften tannins. During fermentation, we daily punch down the cap of skins at the top of the fermenting tanks to thoroughly macerate the skins and juice for optimal color and flavor, while closely monitoring tannin levels. Once fermentation completes, we drain the free-run juice by gravity and transfer the wines to French oak barrels (34% new in 2010), where they age for eight months before blending. The 2010 Syrah spent an additional six months aging in barrel prior to bottling in February, 2012. (In 2010, we used a high percentage of barrels formed from water-bent, rather than fired, staves, which helped emphasize our Syrah's rich fruit while softening tannins and ensuring a discreet oak character.)

Tasting Notes

Our 2010 Syrah displays a saturated dark ruby/purple color and wonderfully complex aromas of roasted earth, toasted black fruits, caramel and licorice. Lush and mouthfilling with beautifully integrated tannins, its concentrated black cherry, cassis, blackberry, black licorice and pepper spice flavors culminate in a long, juicy, mineral-y finish. While this sumptuous Syrah is delicious to drink now, it will age beautifully in bottle for another 5-7 years.

Grape variety: 97%% Syrah, 3% Grenache **Vineyards**: 100% Napa Valley, 62% estate **Harvest dates**: September 24 – October 7, 2010

Fermentation: small open-top tanks

Barrel aging: 14 months in 34% new French oak

Alcohol: 14.4%

Total acidity: 0.62 g/100 ml

pH: 3.66

Bottled: February, 2012 **Winemaker**: Julianne Laks