



**2004  
CALIFORNIA CUVÉE  
SYRAH**

**WINEMAKER'S NOTES**

Every year we at JC Cellars we are given an opportunity to blend wines from plantings of our various vineyards sources throughout the state. This is a wine for the table. Ready to drink now or to lie down for 1-5 years. The California Cuvée always contains a great spice backbone of white pepper from our Ventana vineyard. An amazing cherry and raspberry core from the Fess Parker vineyard, followed with ripe tannins and a mocha/smoke finish from Musci and Shannon Ridge vineyards. So versatile a wine that it can be paired with any of your favorite foods, or drink well on it's own.

As I always say: "Drink it now, we'll make more!"

*Composition: 92% Syrah, 8% Petite Syrah*

**VINTAGE**

The 2004 growing season experienced a very early, warm spring followed by very moderate summer conditions. Early September brought some heat spikes around Labor Day, and then temperatures decreased to allow for more hang time. An early harvest was predicted because bud break, bloom, and veraison were ahead of normal. Crop size for our vineyards was down about 20%, producing a darker and more brooding Syrah. We harvested our grapes a full 2 weeks earlier than normal.

*Grapes: (Average) 27.2 degrees Brix, 3.82 pH, .63% initial acid*

**VINEYARDS**

It's always interesting for us to blend together our different vineyards and see how the combination takes on a life of its own, this year was no different. The majority of the lots chosen for the 2004 were sourced from 43% Fess Parker Syrah from Santa Ynez, 30% Ventana Syrah from Arroyo Seco, 13% Musci Syrah from Alexander Valley, and 8% Shannon Ridge Petite Syrah from Lake County.

*Grape Sourcing: California*

**FERMENTATION AND AGING**

For our California Cuvée, all lots were kept separate till we put together the final blend.

The lots were cold soaked for 3 days before inoculating with different Rhone isolated yeasts. The different lots were punched down 5 times per day by hand to ensure maximum color and flavor extraction. The cooperages that were used are a combination of some of our favorites: Meyrieux, Seguin Moreau, and Saury. Meyrieux barrels bring a combination of smoke and toast that we love. A big, bold barrel for big, bold wines. Our Seguin Moreau barrels are made from the U-stave process where U-shaped grooves are carved out of the inside staves of the barrel to give greater oak surface contact to the wine. We believe these barrels give our wines a great mid-palate, along with a hint of vanillin. Saury barrels give a sense of elegance to the wine. The aromatics are always very floral with hints of Lavender. For our 2004 California Cuvée we used 10% new French oak. The rest of the wine is composed of a 70% French/30% American blend of 1-3 year old oak barrels. 735 cases produced. Unfined and unfiltered.

*Wine Analysis: 15.2% alcohol by volume*

55 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakland, CA 94607 tel: 510 749 9463 fax: 510 864 0897  
[www.jccellars.com](http://www.jccellars.com) wine@jccellars.com