



Robert Parker's

Wine Advocate

The Independent Consumer's Bimonthly Guide to Fine Wine

JAFFURS WINE CELLARS	2004	SYRAH	SANTA BARBARA	(\$24.00)	RED	90
JAFFURS WINE CELLARS	2004	SYRAH AMPELOS VINEYARD	SANTA BARBARA	(\$42.00)	RED	91
JAFFURS WINE CELLARS	2003	SYRAH BIEN NACIDO VINEYARD	SANTA BARBARA	(\$30.00)	RED	93
JAFFURS WINE CELLARS	2003	SYRAH MELVILLE VINEYARD	SANTA RITA HILLS	(\$38.00)	RED	94
JAFFURS WINE CELLARS	2003	SYRAH THOMPSON VINEYARD	SANTA BARBARA	(\$34.00)	RED	91

These are the finest Syrahs I have yet tasted from Craig Jaffurs, and given their realistic pricing, they represent sleeper selections among Rhône Rangers. A good value, the **2004 Syrah Santa Barbara** exhibits an opaque blue/purple color along with a gorgeous bouquet of smoked meats, blackberries, and blue fruits, wonderful density, an opulent/voluptuous texture, and deep, richly fruity flavors that reveal no hard edges. This realistically priced, knock-out Syrah should drink well for 3-4 years. A big wine, the inky/blue/purple-tinged **2004 Syrah Ampelos Vineyard** reveals plenty of black currant and black cherry fruit along with smoky, graphite notes, nicely integrated oak, terrific full-bodied intensity, and a long, heady finish. Consume it over the next 7-8 years.

The following three wines performed even better this year than last. The dense ruby/purple-hued **2003 Syrah Thompson Vineyard** offers white chocolate, espresso roast, and cassis aromas, supple, creamy,

chocolaty, black cherry, and cassis flavors, plenty of glycerin, and less alcohol than some of its siblings. Luscious and heady, it should provide plenty of pleasure over the next 7-8 years. My favorite offering is the opaque purple-colored **2003 Syrah Melville Vineyard**, a superb concoction of black, blue, and red fruit, camphor, and acacia flower aromas. Full-bodied with multiple layers of flavor yet neither heavy nor overripe, this beauty possesses terrific fruit intensity as well as a spectacular finish. It should drink well for 6-10 years or longer. Looking like motor oil on a moonless night, the **2003 Syrah Bien Nacido Vineyard** reveals notions of graphite, *crème de cassis*, blackberry liqueur, licorice, and olives. Deep, rich, full-bodied, seamless, pure, powerful yet supple flavors coat the palate. Like its siblings, it is a *tour de force* in winemaking from Craig Jaffurs. Drink the Bien Nacido cuvée over the next 7-8 years. Tel. (805) 962-7003

SAMSARA	2004	SYRAH AMPELOS VINEYARD	SANTA RITA HILLS	(\$40.00)	RED	90
SAMSARA	2004	SYRAH MELVILLE VINEYARD	SANTA RITA HILLS	(\$40.00)	RED	92
SAMSARA	2004	SYRAH PURISIMA MOUNTAIN	SANTA YNEZ	(\$40.00)	RED	90
SAMSARA	2004	SYRAH VERNA'S VINEYARD	SANTA BARBARA	(\$40.00)	RED	92

Owned by Chad Melville of Melville Vineyard, Samsara makes limited production cuvées of less than 100 cases each, so I'll keep my notes brief. For an American Syrah, the dark ruby/purple-tinged **2004 Syrah Ampelos Vineyard** possesses abundant finesse and elegance. Attractive blackberry, blueberry, earth, and pepper characteristics emerge from this dense, stylish, delineated effort. Drink it over the next 5-7 years. The deep ruby/purple-colored **2004 Syrah Verna's Vineyard**, which is co-fermented with small quantities of Viognier, offers more expressive floral-tinged aromatics, a broad, expansive, opulent mouthfeel, and a

long, lush finish. It should be consumed over the next 4-5 years. The **2004 Syrah Purisima Mountain Vineyard** (100% Syrah) is a deep, rich, heady, firm, earthy effort displaying more animal, herb, and meat characteristics. While outstanding, it is more monolithic and earth-driven. Revealing classic blueberry and blackberry scents along with a hint of camphor, deep, medium to full-bodied flavors, and impressive purity as well as elegance, the **2004 Syrah Melville Vineyard** should provide plenty of pleasure over the next 4-5 years. All of these wines offer a lovely introduction to Samsara. Tel. (805) 331-2292