

epsilon



2005 syrah – “ε” (epsilon) alisos vineyards – santa barbara county

harvest: we have now worked with the alisos vineyards for a few years and we love the grapes that they produce. tucked away in the hills south east of the small village of los alamos few people know about this treasure. the vineyard has lots to offer – especially when it comes to red rhone varietals. The syrah grapes are from two different blocks of Alisos: clone 7 from block 4 and from the “old vines block”. we harvested clone 7 on Oct 7 at 26.2 brix, 3.76 pH and 4.2 g TA – and the old vines on nov 3 (late!) at 24.7/3.51/4.72. total production was 4.9t

fermentation: the grapes were crushed and de-stemmed into small 1 ½ ton fermenters and cold soaked for 2-3 days before inoculating. the yeasts D254, VQ15 and BM 45 were used and twice daily punchdowns were administered. after fermentation we drained the free-run juice to barrel and gently pressed the skins. the press wine was blended with the free-run to allow for early integration.

aging: we were originally going to use these grapes for our syrache blend. when we tasted through them in the barrels we learned that the flavors were so good that we just had to bottle it on its own – the 2005 epsilon was born! we also used 35% new oak and 65% neutral barrels on this syrah but decided to try a couple of new things: with the french oak (Remond) we combined a hungarian (Trust) and a hybrid barrel, where the staves are american and the heads french. the wine was been aged in the barrel for 17 months and racked three times. of our 14 barrels we selected our favorite 6 and used them for the epsilon.

tasting notes: a deep, dark garnet red color promises a big wine. the nose indicates spices and dark fruit as well as a little vanilla and crème brulee. the pallet is big: candy, rainier cherries, chocolate-raspberry tart, a hint of cinnamon and violets while the oak flavors are light and very well integrated

production: 140 cases and 33 magnums produced – bottled March 29, 2007. release january 2008.

what is this greek thing: we all love greece! Rebecca and Peter were married there and they visit each year. ampelos is the greek word for “vine” – this is where it all begins. each of our estate and specialty wines will be given a greek letter as a name. “ε” is the greek letter epsilon – used mathematically as a small, positive quantity. every year we are releasing an epsilon wine when we find these treasures.