

# Santiago Canyon Winery

## 2008 Syrah

Alexander Valley AVA, Sonoma, CA

**Vineyard:** The grapes for Santiago Canyon Winery's Syrah come from a single private estate vineyard on the western most edge of the ridge dividing the Alexander Valley and Dry Creek Valley. This estate Syrah vineyard is sited on a very rocky ridge with gravelly soils of low fertility and vigor, which makes the vines struggle, providing this large-clustered variety sufficient stress to ensure highly concentrated fruit development. At twenty years old, the vines are mature; and vertical trellis and cane pruned. SCW's 2008 Syrah is powerful, yet highly refined, reflecting the singularity that clearly defines the best Syrah that Alexander Valley delivers.

**Vintage:** The exemplary 2008 growing season commenced with a dry, mild winter and unusually warm spring, which prompted early bud-break and bloom. The summer was consistently mild, which enabled our modest crop of small-clustered Alexander Valley Syrah grapes to ripen slowly and evenly, developing rich, distinctive varietal flavors. Warm temperatures in early September, followed by classic California Indian Summer weather, allowed us to harvest our Syrah fruit at optimum sugar and acid balance and full phenolics maturity on September 15th.

**Winemaking:** "Our rich and bold Syrah is finally here," winemaker Jon Theurich, "JT" exclaims. Our 2008 vintage produced the best Syrah fruit we've seen in a long time from Alexander Valley AVA. We cold-soaked our Syrah grapes for ten days at 36 degrees and fermented the wine for 12 days with extended maceration, produced in small batches to carefully control temperature and enhance flavour. Once the primary fermentation was complete we transferred the wine into 75% new smaller Hungarian oak barrels for malolactic fermentation and three months of aging. **Technical Data:** Alcohol 15.5%, Brix 27, pH 3.57, TA .58g/100ml, yeast strains SYR, BM45 and GRE, 100% malolactic.

**Tasting Notes:** "Our Alexander Valley Syrah suggests it may become one of the best Syrahs from California in a long time, says Winemaker "JT". This bold and heady Syrah is dark purple in color, and offers the classic complex aromas of blackberry, plum, violet and leather. These aromas draw you in and lead to deep, brooding fruit flavors. On the palate, the thick, chewy dark plum and blackberry, are framed with a core of rich leather tannins, pepper and a touch of earth. Concentrated and layered with distinctive character, this Syrah finishes warm and smooth. The fruit density and structured tannins will enable this wine to age beautifully for several years. "Our hope is that you enjoy this luscious and rich and elegant Syrah from the Alexander Valley Vineyard as much as we enjoyed making it." – *Jon Theurich, "JT"*