



Chico's Hill Syrah
Russian River Valley
2014

Vineyard Character

Chico's Hill is a one acre vineyard on an easterly facing slope. It has a great soil profile which is predominantly fractured rock. Fractured rock makes for great growing conditions because the rock warms the earth by the early morning sun, stimulating vine growth, and in addition, rain water penetrates the soil depth easily and drains off. The landscape is long and narrow, approximately a 45 degree slope, and is shaped like a horse's nose. The rows are oriented in a north-south direction to equalize sunlight exposure on both sides of the canopy morning and afternoon. For vine training we installed a vertical trellis system with fruit wire sitting 22 inches above ground level, encouraging consistent ripening of the grape clusters. The vineyard consists solely of clone 877.

Growing Year

The growing year in 2014 was the third dry year in a row and was full of unforeseen challenges provided by Mother Nature. You would think the ongoing drought, excessive heat from March thru June, and hail in early April would have brought down the quality of this vintage. Thankfully this was not the case! Even though the harvest was very early, the small berry size and healthy yields have produced very well balanced wines; they are not over-bearing in tannin or structure, and are a pleasure to drink.

Wine Statistics

The grapes are picked between 25 and 27 degrees brix to ensure mature ripe fruit flavors. After picking, the whole berries undergo a long cool fermentation to generate skin contact and expose fruit character, fermenting with wild yeast. The juice is transferred into oak barrels with a touch of residual sugar remaining to complete the fermentation process in barrel until dry. It rests in 65% new French oak on its gross lees for fifteen months. The finished wine is un-fined, un-filtered, neither cold nor heat stabilized and contains naturally occurring sediment.

Case Production: 83

Tasting Notes

The 2014 Chico's Hill Syrah has aromas of camphor, cocoa and blackberry followed by a palate of polished black fruit bright raspberry and pomegranate and tobacco.

Historical Acclaim

2014 Vintage

- 94 points Antonio Galloni, Vinous
- 92+ points The Wine Advocate

2013 Vintage

- 95 points Robert M Parker Jr., The Wine Advocate
- 94 points Antonio Galloni, Vinous

Winemaker: Bryan Kvamme

Consulting Winemaker: Erin Green