



2009 Bien Nacido Syrah

This wine is 100% syrah from Bien Nacido Vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley. 65% of the grapes came from the X block, the oldest syrah block at Bien Nacido (planted in 1973 to reisling and grafted to syrah in 1986), and 35% came from the Baja section of Block Eleven, a hillside block planted in 1997.

The Block Eleven grapes were harvested on October 5th at 24 .5 brix, 6.4 acidity and 3.52 pH. For the X Block portion 44% whole clusters were used in the fermentation which adds a layer of spice and complexity and helps the wine age. The wine was aged for 19 months in mostly French oak barrels (20% new) with 10% new Hungarian oak barrels in the mix as well. The wine was lightly fined with egg whites and bottled without filtration in June 2011. 2002 cases were produced.

Along with the 2001 and 2005, this is my favorite BN syrah from this past decade. The high percentage of X block gives this wine a depth and richness and 2009 was just a really good vintage too. The aromas are classic Bien Nacido and classic cool climate syrah- spicy, peppery, clove, nutmeg, dried raspberry and just enough of that thyme and sage character that comes from the stems. This is a fairly big wine but balanced alcohol of 13.8%. A bit more tannic than the last few vintages but with the fruit to back it up. Very enjoyable already (especially out of the half bottles), but could easily be put in the cellar for 10-15 years.