

# 1999 Syrah

## Russian River Valley

**D**eerfield Ranch Winery, in the heart of Sonoma Valley at Kenwood, is a 5,000-case winery specializing in small lots of handmade wines from select vineyards of the California North Coast region. Visitors sample our wines at the *Family Wineries of Sonoma Valley Tasting Room*, at 9200 Sonoma Highway in Kenwood. Find us on the Web at [www.deerfieldranch.com](http://www.deerfieldranch.com), or call 707 833-5215

**The Appellation:** The Russian River, one of California's last un-dammed, wild rivers, stretches half way across Sonoma County from the mountains east of the Santa Rosa Plain to the Pacific Ocean at Jenner. It's cooling influence moderates the climate along its path and tributaries forming a unique viticultural microclimate. Here grow some of the best wine grapes in the world. The Syrah grapes grown here have cool climate characteristics of elegance and subtlety paired with the varietals natural earthiness.

**The Wine:** This is our first Syrah. After many years of making Cabernet, Merlot and Zinfandel it was fun to challenge a new varietal. The most famous Syrahs come from the Rhone district of Southern France and from Australia, where the same grape and wine is known as Shiraz. We choose to make our Syrah in the Rhone style which, with its peasant background It's a softer, fruitier and more mellow wine than the more Cabernet like Shiraz from Australia. It was aged in oak for a few months and bottled in its first year, much as the villagers do in France. This is a food friendly wine that is easy to drink. It's meant to be enjoyed while still young yet is rich and robust enough to satisfy the Cabernet drinker.

**Tasting Notes:** The color is a dark and brilliant red with a little blue around the edges. The nose has hints of berries, pepper, green tea, and a forest after the rain with a promise of fullness and ripe fruit. The first taste experience is a forward fruitiness followed by a robust and full middle palate. There is an underlying earthy quality, not dirty but like sweet roots. The flavors mingle and linger without any acidic sensations to the tongue or bitterness to the sides. The tannins are present but soft. The oak is balanced and well integrated. It shows the freshness of youth with the promise of age worthiness. It's body is somewhere between a good Merlot and a Cabernet with a little Zinfandel thrown in, a delightful overall experience. This Syrah pairs well with Mediterranean cuisine, especially stews with mushrooms and simply grilled meats.

### Harvest & Winemaking Data:

Winemaker:	Robert Rex
Harvested:	By hand, October 12, 1999
Brix at Harvest:	24.5
Acid after soak:	.70
pH at harvest:	3.34
Yeast:	Pasteur Red
Fermentation:	In open top tank for 8 days
Max. Fermentation Temp:	80 F
Malo/Lactic Conversion:	100%
Fining:	2 egg white per barrel
SO <sub>2</sub> at Bottling:	12 ppm
Bottled:	August 20, 2000
Alcohol:	13.9%
Released:	December 1, 2000
Awards & Reviews:	Not yet submitted
Age worthiness:	5 to 6 years but we're drinking ours now

