

THE
STEVEN KENT
WINERY

“Social Gathering”
2010 SYRAH, LIVERMORE VALLEY

The 2010 vintage continued a streak of cooler than normal seasons (that extends from 2009-2011) and those conditions are mirrored in the structure of this new Syrah release.

Syrah makes up 4.92 total acres divided up into two blocks, each planted to a different clone. Block 14—3.85 acres of the total, planted to clone 383—is again the source of the fruit for *Social Gathering*, our April 2013 Collector's Circle release. Unlike the 2007 vintage, this wine is 100% Syrah. Yields on this block, as well as with the other 13 on the Ghielmetti site, have been pruned to provide 3 to 3.5 tons of fruit per acre. These small yields help to insure that the fruit we do harvest is dense, concentrated, and flavorful.

Social Gathering is a wonderful example of the style of Syrah I prefer: exhibiting aromas of dark berry, licorice, white pepper, and toasted herbs and oak, the wine is lusciously restrained in the mouth. I much prefer wines like Syrah, which can be overly fruity and lacking in structure (think, a coloring book in which most of the crayon is outside the lines), to be circumscribed by appropriate levels of tannin. This structure, far from constraining the wine, makes the opulent fruit notes even more so.

On entry, dark fruit and finely toasted barrel take center stage filling the mouth with great flavor and heft. With aeration, however, the redder berry notes of Syrah begin to assert themselves, and the mid-palate opens up to accommodate that rich fruit. On the finish, *Social Gathering*, shows very pleasing tannins that help to extend the wine's length. Fermented in open-top fermenters, and aged for about 18 months in new and second-use barrels, this wine will accompany Mediterranean cuisine beautifully and age well for the next three to five years.

HISTORY

We have been making Syrah since the 2002 vintage (that fruit coming from the Fairbairn Ranch in Mendocino County). Differing in almost every way from Cabernet (in this case, those difference are to be celebrated!), Syrah has begun to find many ardent adherents. Though the grape does well in a variety of climates, we believe that the warm days and cool nights of the Livermore Valley provide an especially hospitable environment for this delicious wine.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date:	October 23, 2010
Fruit:	100% Syrah, Ghielmetti Vineyard, Block 14. The fruit came in with brix levels of around 26° with a complex, ripe flavor profile. Alcohol 14.2%
Fermentation:	After destemming and crushing the fruit was fermented small open-topped bins. Fermentation and maceration lasted about a week to 10 days. Malolactic fermentation was done in barrel.
Aging:	67% new oak (50% American, 50% Hungarian), 33% older barrels (American and French)
Time in Barrel:	18 months
Release Date:	May 4, 2013

VINEYARD

Location:	Ghielmetti Vineyard located in the eastern end of the Livermore Valley, 3.2 miles east of the Winery; n37° 39' 40.2" Latitude and w121° 39' 48.5" Longitude, 899 feet above sea level.
Soil:	Predominantly sandy loam.
Training:	All vineyards use the Vertical Shoot Position (VSP) trellising method.

ARTWORK

J.D. Nelson was born in Minnesota in 1954 and has lived in Sacramento since 1957. His major influences through the 60's and 70's were the pulp comic artists published in black and white by Warren and in color by E.C. He also favored the surrealist painters of the 1920's and 30's, especially Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, and Marcel Duchampe. This oil painting, done in 1975, was inspired by a short story by H.P. Lovecraft titled "The Lurking Fear".