

RIDGE 2003

CALIFORNIA LYTTON WEST SYRAH

2003 Syrah, Lytton West Vineyard, bottled June 05

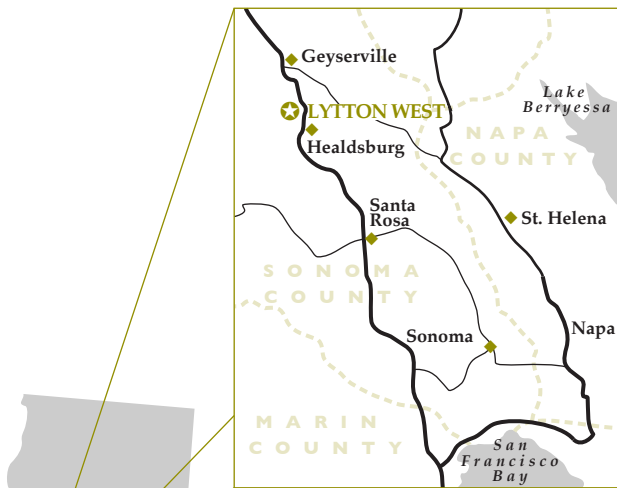
Ridge has worked with grape varieties from the south of France for many years—among the first were grenache, carignane, and mourvèdre (mataro). In 1995 we acquired the western half of Captain Litton's nineteenth-century holdings, inheriting a few blocks of syrah and some viognier. We have made small quantities of syrah—available only through the winery—since 1996. Having gradually added to the original plantings, in this vintage we are able to offer a limited national release. A whole-berry, floating-cap fermentation permitted gentle, rapid extraction; three of the nine small lots included viognier in co-fermentation with the syrah. Aged for eighteen months in air-dried american oak barrels, this fine syrah is appealing as a young wine, yet has the structure to develop further over the next ten or more years. PD (3/05)

91% SYRAH, 9% VIOGNIER

14.8% alcohol by volume

Tasting Notes

- Color** Opaque ruby
- Nose** Boysenberry fruit. Perfumed violet, cardamom, ginger root, wet clay, white pepper.
- Palate** Rich, dark brambly fruit. Full-bodied and vibrant, coated tannins, lively acidity. Black fruit and characteristic regional gravel/mineral/earth. A long, complex finish.



History

Ridge has just over three acres of mature syrah and six acres of younger vines at Lytton Springs West: since 1996, we have produced limited amounts for the Advance Tasting Program. In 2001, we added nine more acres of syrah, and one-and-a-half of viognier. Because matching a grape varietal to the climate and soil of a particular site has permanent implications—and is a costly decision to revise—we have planted several of the finest clones and field selections in each parcel.

Vintage

- Harvest Dates** 16 - 24 September
- Grapes** Average brix 27.2°
- Fermentation** No inoculation; natural primary and secondary. Pressed at six days.
- Aging** 100% air-dried american oak barrels (7% new, 25% two years old, 68% three to six years old).
- Time in Barrel** Eighteen months

Vineyard

- First RIDGE SYRAH LYTTON WEST** 2003
- Location** The bench and hills separating Alexander and Dry Creek Valleys, just north of Healdsburg in Sonoma County.
- Soils** Varied, with a predominance of gravelly clay, gravelly clay loam on the hillsides.
- Vine Training** Cane pruned, vertical curtain trellis.
- Yields** 1.5 - 3.0 tons per acre

Growing Season

- Rainfall** Sixty inches (slightly above normal)
- Bloom** Mid-May
- Weather** Rain at bloom reduced crop. Early September heat hastened harvest.