

background

Melville is an estate driven winery with a focused commitment to producing Burgundian and Northern Rhône varietals with the utmost respect for their history as well as the site on which they are grown.

Located in the center of the Santa Rita Hills appellation, in Santa Barbara County, the estate currently has 85 acres planted to vineyards. The climate here is significantly impacted by its proximity to the ocean, and marked by consistent morning and evening fog and steady afternoon winds. These cooling trends are not only perfectly suited for pinot noir, syrah and chardonnay, but they also serve to prolong the growing season allowing for heightened varietal flavor intensity. The soil is predominantly Lompoc dune sand, with various blocks possessing clay loam with shallow hard pans of Monterey shale.

The vineyard is planted at a spacing of 8' x 3' (1,812 vines per acre) and are predominantly oriented on a North / South axis. Vines are all vertically shoot positioned with aggressive canopy management to insure proper ripening and varietal development. The estate currently has eleven clones of pinot noir, ten clones of syrah and five clones of chardonnay all on a variety of low vigor rootstocks. All blocks are fermented in small lots and are isolated through their entire period of elevage to provide us with an on-going exhibition of where we can fine tune the estate so as to arrive at our desired ends.

At the time of harvest, we consider the wines to already be made, and we take every precaution to not interfere with their own natural path of evolution. Compromised fruit is dropped before the time of harvest, though we also sort at picking to eliminate any possibility of marginal fruit entering the winery. The chardonnay is gently whole-cluster pressed at a cool temperature, is cold-settled overnight and is then gravity transferred to French cooperage for fermentation and aging. The pinot noir and syrah are either de-stemmed or transferred directly to small, 1.5 ton fermenters where they are cold-soaked for five to eight days before the initiation of fermentation. Upon the completion of fermentation, the wine will remain in contact with the stems and skins for an additional seven to ten days allowing for the development of long chain, supple tannins. At pressing, the fermenters are dumped directly into the press with the wine then transferred directly into barrel. Upon elevage on gross lees with no SO₂, the wines are pressure racked once following the waning moon after the Summer solstice, and are bottled two lunar cycles thereafter with neither fining nor filtration.

Ron Melville, *President and Owner*
Greg Brewer, *Winemaker*
Brent Melville, *Vineyard Manager Los Alamos*
Chad Melville, *Vineyard Manager Santa Rita Hills*
Stephen Janes, *Sales Director*