

## Que Syrah Syrah



Syrah and Shiraz are two names for the same grape, much like Pinot Gris and Pinot Grigio. “Shiraz” is the Australian (New World) version—fruity, full throttle, high in extract and alcohol. “Syrah,” in contrast, evokes the northern Rhône—earthy, brooding, meaty, peppery, and leathery. Both are spicy. New World producers typically choose the name (Syrah/Shiraz) that reflects their style and expression of the grape.

One tale of the grape’s origin tells of Crusaders returning to France via Cyprus, bringing with them vines from the Persian capital Shiraz. However, DNA profiling in France and California has shown that Syrah arose from two southeastern France forebears, Dureza (red) and Mondeuse Blanche (white). The grape is disease resistant, late to bud but somewhat early to ripen. It thrives in warm, dry climates, growing in compact bunches of small, deeply colored berries. Syrah ages well and adds longevity to any wine in which it is blended.

Today’s wines reflect both styles, with an emphasis on the French. **Hector Wine Company Syrah 2015** provides an elegant, cool climate, northern Rhône style wine with pepper and anise notes. Grapes were picked and sorted by hand, fermented and aged in oak, and bottled unfiltered. France gives us two versions. **Château Maris La Touge 2014** is made of biodynamically grown grapes from Minervois in the south of France. It contains a dollop of Grenache in this vintage and sees no oak contact. Its dark fruit, pepper, wild herb, and olive notes are light on their feet and well integrated. **Saint Cosme Côtes-du-Rhône Rouge 2015** is a bit of an oddity—although from the southern Rhône, where Grenache is the major grape, it is 100% Syrah, grown organically. This is a richer wine, and it too is made without oak contact. The result is that the fruit sings and shines, offering red currant, bright berries, and gingerbread.

Did you know that Morocco wine has made wine since ancient times? **Domaine des Ouleb Thaleb Syrocco Syrah 2013** is made by famed northern Rhône winemaker Alain Graillot, who discovered the vineyard and winery while bicycling between Casablanca and Rabat. He partnered with the owners to make his own wine there. The vineyard is farmed organically; the wine ferments in concrete and ages in a combination of tank and new barrels. This wine offers dark fruits, dried cherries, and sandalwood spice. There is, of course, an Australian offering: **Thorn-Clarke Terra Barossa Winemaker’s Selection Shiraz 2015**, in a liter bottle. This is a full-bodied expression of plum and blackberry fruit with oak spice, reflecting the year it spends in oak. It has a certain restraint, excellent fruit, and a plush set of tannins.

Whichever name you use, whether it stands alone or parties with other grapes, Syrah/Shiraz is a great partner for grilled foods, black beans, hearty stews, fresh or dried herbs, and barbecue of all types.

Join us next week as we take a break from winter’s chill and warm things up to “Surf California!”

HANG TIME -- "Que Syrah Syrah"

Thursday, February 16, 2017

PRICES ARE FOR:

1 BOTTLE – 6 BOTTLES – 12 BOTTLES (Mixing OK!)

**Hector Wine Company Syrah 2015**  
(Finger Lakes, New York)

\$28 each - \$25.20 (6) - \$23.80 (12)

**Château Maris La Touge 2014**  
(Minervois La Livinière, France)

Syrah, Grenache

\$16.50 each - \$14.85 (6) - \$14.03 (12)

**Saint Cosme Côtes-du-Rhône Rouge 2015**  
(Côtes-du-Rhône, France)

\$16 each - \$14.40 (6) - \$13.60 (12)

**Domaine des Ouleb Thaleb Syrocco Syrah 2013**  
(Zenata, Morocco)

\$20 each - \$18 (6) - \$17 (12)

**Thorn-Clarke Terra Barossa Winemaker’s Selection Shiraz 2015** (Barossa, Australia)

\$20 each - \$18 (6) - \$17 (12) 1,000ml (1 liter)

TONIGHT’S BREAD IS FROM WIDE AWAKE BAKERY  
[WWW.WIDEAWAKEBAKERY.COM](http://WWW.WIDEAWAKEBAKERY.COM)

Our subject the next week will be  
"Surf California"

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