

Wine & Spirits

MAGAZINE

Drew Family Wines

2016 Mendocino Ridge Syrah Valenti Ranch

Mendocino, California

August 2018

Score: 95 Points

When it was first poured, I liked this wine, clearly built for Rhône-heads with its cracked-green-peppercorn spice and porky intensity. But then I fell in love with it the next day. As it opens, it turns stemmy in the best way, and races, fragrant, rosy, with the scent of freshly turned earth and tart red fruit. I could drink this all night, starting with a thick-cut pork chop, then with aged Comté, then just on its own. Valenti Ranch, an east-facing ridge six miles from the Pacific, consistently grows some of California's best syrahs (I've scored Drew's 2008 and 2011 95 points or better; Luke Sykora scored the 2014 at the same level). Jason Drew makes this wine without added yeasts and with 50 percent whole clusters, cofermenting the fruit with a little viognier. Get some.

