



ALTA COLINA	2008	CLAUDIA PROPRIETARY WHITE	PASO ROBLES (\$28.00) WHITE	87
ALTA COLINA	2008	GSM PROPRIETARY BLEND	PASO ROBLES (\$40.00) RED	89
ALTA COLINA	2008	PETITE SIRAH ANN'S BLOCK	PASO ROBLES (\$48.00) RED	92
ALTA COLINA	2008	SYRAH OLD 900	PASO ROBLES (\$48.00) RED	92
ALTA COLINA	2008	SYRAH TOASTED SLOPE	PASO ROBLES (\$40.00) RED	91

This small, artisanal producer has turned out five attractive wines that are worth pursuing the Rhône Ranger enthusiasts. The only white wine, the **2008 Claudia**, is a realistically-priced blend of 58% Marsanne, 21% Roussanne, and the rest Grenache Blanc. It is a crisp, fresh, medium-bodied wine with hints of nectarine and orange rind in an elegant, medium-bodied style emphasizing fruit and purity. It should drink nicely for another 1-2 years. The blockbuster **2008 Petite Sirah Ann's Block** is for those with a cold cellar and lots of patience. Oodles of white chocolate, cocoa, blackberry, pepper, and camphor jump from the glass of this black/purple-colored wine. A superb Petite Sirah with 15-20 years of life ahead of it, the wine is full-bodied, has relatively silky tannins for this varietal, but is rich, dense, and multi-layered. Give it 2-3 years of cellaring and drink it over the following two decades.

I like the idea that some of the serious reds have white varietals blended in for additional complexity. That's noticeable in the **2008 Syrah Toasted Slope**, a blend of 92% Syrah with a little Mourvèdre and Grenache, as well as 3% Viognier. As small as this component part may be, the Viognier seems to give the wine uplifting, intense, almost exotic aromatics akin to a California version of a French Côte Rôtie. Deep ruby purple with an intense, broad perfume of red and black fruits as well as spring flowers, the wine is fleshy, succulent, opulent, and silky textured. Just irresistible, this wine should continue to drink well for 5-6 years, perhaps longer. The **2008 Syrah Old 900** has 2% Viognier blended in and is their biggest wine, tipping the scales at 15.7 alcohol, but one doesn't sense that given the layers of concentration and the big espresso roast, chocolate fudge, crème de cassis, and blackberry nose. Deep and full-bodied, pure and dense, this hedonistic fruit bomb is also imbued with glycerin and richness. Certainly a lot of the baby fat will fall away over the next 1-2 years. Sadly, production is under 100 cases. Lastly, their **2008 GSM** is a Paso Robles take on a French Côtes du Rhône. A blend of 34% Syrah, 33% Grenache, and the rest Mourvèdre, roasted herbs and dusty, earthy notes, as well as lavender and tobacco leaf lend a Provençal character to the aromatics and flavors. The fruit quality is present, and the wine medium to full-bodied, round, generous, and ideal for drinking over the next 2-3 years. Tel. (805) 801-5989; Fax (805) 541-8025