

**Kendric Vineyards****2005 Syrah, Reward Ranch
(Shenandoah Valley (CA))**

Kendric Vineyards owner Stewart Johnson is the poster child for following your passion in life. Johnson's seminal moment was when he was a Hastings law school student, sitting in an office as an intern, and "wishing I was pulling up rocks in my parents' vineyard." The Johnson family owns Reward Ranch in the Shenandoah Valley, near Plymouth, and Johnson realized that's where his heart was, and in 2001, he planted two acres of Syrah on the ranch. The family also farms five acres of Sangiovese which it sells to neighboring Vino Noceto for its reserve Sangiovese bottlings.

Shenandoah Valley is 'mostly Zinfandel country,'" says Johnson, with its hot days and nights cooled by the Delta breezes, but he wanted to cultivate Syrah, with a different approach, he says. "I like to pick ahead of other vintners growing Syrah in the region. I am not looking for that heavy, ripe, extracted style. I want liveliness to the fruit."

Kendric Vineyards, named after his late father, Kendric Johnson, who was a dentist, has released its second Syrah bottling, the 2005 Shenandoah Valley Syrah. It is a more than respectable beginning for a young vintner. While the 05 Syrah fruit "is a touch riper than the norm for me," says Johnson, the wine still has that bounce that Johnson goes after. It has a clean luscious nose, with deep blueberry and dark cherry notes and a hint of spice, which Johnson likens to a subtle Herbes de Provence aspect. There is a bit of charcoal note and a little ash, which is very characteristic of the region defined by iron rich and granite soils. The wine has good structure, finesse and some complexity, a promising start to a new expression of Foothills Syrah.

Reviewed February 29, 2008 by [Jean Deitz Sexton](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Kendric Vineyards](#)
Vineyard: Reward Ranch
Vintage: 2005
Wine: Syrah
Appellation: [Shenandoah Valley \(CA\)](#)
Grape: Syrah / Shiraz
Price: \$18.00

THE REVIEWER**Jean Deitz Sexton**

Jean Deitz Sexton's first experiences with wine were drinking Italian wine as an NYU college student in New York City. She continues to have a love of red wines with a reasonable alcohol level, that have rich flavor, good fruit yet softness. Deitz Sexton has a great fondness for Rhone varietals, anything with bubbles and of late, is obsessed with blends. Her approach to wine reviewing is pretty straightforward: does it have a pleasant nose, clarity of flavor, interesting notes, good mouth feel, and a satisfying finish?