

**Tamayo Family Vineyards****2004 Syrah
(Contra Costa County)**

Just like the Chinese powder which melded the five elements - sour, bitter, sweet, salty, and pungent - into one, the blend of cinnamon, clove, fennel seed, star anise, and Szechuan peppercorns we know as Asian Five Spice, this gorgeous, beautifully expressive Syrah would give life to any bland dish. As terroir-driven as they come from California, this Contra Costa County Syrah is another hit from the Brentwood, California-based **Tamayo Family Vineyards** and their

winemaker Jon Engelskirger. While not sleek or polished, deep in color, or oaky, this non-Ferrari delivers on character and charm.

Bright, well-saturated ruby and viscous with well-marked tears, it has notes of stewed meats, freshly picked heirloom tomato, earth, dust, tar, and Crozes Hermitage-like rubber. On the palate the wine is big, round, voluptuous, and deeply flavored with cherry cobbler, plum, fig, prune, prosciutto, bacon, and earth notes. The finish is long and berry-imbued. Enjoy this well-balanced if big-boned beauty with blackened duck breast, grilled swordfish, lamb shanks with eggplant and thyme or with Portobello mushrooms and dried cranberries, or with a simple flank steak (bavette) au poivre.

Reviewed August 19, 2007 by [Catherine Fallis](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Tamayo Family Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2004

Wine: Syrah

Appellation: [Contra Costa County](#)

Grape: [Syrah / Shiraz](#)

Price: \$24.00

THE REVIEWER**Catherine Fallis**

Founder and President of Planet Grape LLC, a company committed to bringing the joy of wine, food, and good living into the lives of everyday people, Catherine is creator of the "grape goddess guides to good living," a series of books, television presentations, seminars, and e-learning programs. The fifth woman in the world to become a Master Sommelier, grape goddess Catherine Fallis is still very much down-to-earth.