

2014 Cabernet Franc

Sonoma County (57%), Napa County (43%)



Tasting Notes

Our Cabernet Franc is made from specific vineyards selected by our winemaker to create a wine that captures the essence of the 2014 vintage. This wine accentuates the wonderful dark fruit and spice characteristics that are naturally present in Cabernet Franc grapes. On the nose there is a deep aromatic profile of black currant and plum that continue on the palate with superb oak integration and balance.

Varietal Composition	94% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon
Appellation	Sonoma County (57%), Napa County (43%)
Harvest	October 2014
Technical Data	ALC: 14.5% by vol.; TA: 6.4 G/L; pH: 3.50
Cooperage	20 Months in 100% French Oak Barrels (30% New) Mixed Cooperages
Production	957 Cases

The 2014 Vintage

In the beginning of our growing season, the drought was a main concern. The 2013/2014 winter was one of the driest on record in California and rainfall totals in the Napa Valley were approximately half of normal. However, the timing of the late rains through February and April let our vineyard team relax a little as the vines received a much needed drink of water as they were emerging from dormancy and about to begin bud break. This rainfall recharged our soil and provided enough water to fill the reservoirs. Furthermore, the spring was warm allowing us to save water if needed for irrigation rather than using it for frost protection. As summer began, our vineyards already had full canopies and full clusters. Veraison, when the skins of the grapes change color, typically occurs in late July; but this year we saw the changing color occur much sooner. And finally, while the vines used for high-quality wine production generally don't need much water, a benefit of the drought is that berry sizes are typically smaller and have more concentrated flavors, which our winemaker believes contributes to the overall quality of this year's harvest.

About The Vineyard

The grapes for this wine were sourced from two distinct appellations, Napa Valley and Sonoma County. Blending Cabernet Franc from these two unique AVAs brings great depth and complexity to this wine. The fruit sourced in Sonoma County came from the hills that surround and define Alexander Valley. Ideal for Bordeaux varieties like Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon, the summer daytime temperatures regularly reach the high 80's and 90's, while the evening fog creates a rapid cooling effect that protects the fruits' flavor and boosts acidity. Extremely rocky, well-drained soils and multiple blocks with varying exposures produce grapes that are incredibly small; at harvest they literally burst in the mouth with intense fruit flavor. In Napa Valley the fruit was sourced from Atlas Peak, on a mountain top at nearly 1,500 feet of elevation. This striking site in east Napa sits above the fog line, receiving plenty of sunlight while its temperature stays cool throughout growing season allowing an extra two weeks of hang time for the fruit to develop greater color and complex, fine tannins. The soils are derived from weathered igneous rock that spread uniformly through the vineyard and offer a high drainage capacity, which regulates vine vigor.

Winemaking

This fruit was hand harvested over the course of one month as each block reached maturity. The grapes were de-stemmed but not crushed and placed in stainless steel tanks for whole berry fermentation, a technique winemaker Ana Diogo-Draper uses to preserve the fruit's bright berry flavors and accentuate the spicy character of the Cabernet Franc. Prior to fermentation, the fruit rested at 40-45 F for two days, gently extracting color, flavor and tannin from the grape skins. When the proper extraction had been achieved, the temperature on the tanks was raised so that fermentation could begin. This wine was tasted daily to assess tannin structure and fruit character and was lightly pressed after a 18-day maceration, with the free run juice going to 100% French oak barrels. Ana used only 30% new oak to preserve the freshness and delicacy of the fruit. After 20 months in oak the wine was blended and bottled.

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