



*Tasting Notes:*

Plummy blueberry, black cherry and black currant wrap around a softly layered core of toasted oak in this light and delicate take on the oft-hearty variety. Smatterings of vanilla and dark chocolate tease on the finish.

*Vineyard:*

As you drive from Calistoga in northern Napa across the county line into Knights Valley, the first vines you see belong to Blau Vineyard. Protected from ocean influences more than other Sonoma County growing regions, the warmer climate, slightly higher elevation, and volcanic soils here combine to create a fertile hunting ground for Bordeaux varietal wines that are savory, mineral-driven, and full of character. Malbec is the focus for the ageless Bill Blau, and is planted on the prime hillside spots to attract sunshine and drain excess moisture.

*Vintage:*

The drought continued delivering a fourth straight dry winter and early spring budbreak. Some unsettled weather during flowering led to shatter and lower yields, but the peak summer months brought only a few extreme heat days. Ideal conditions ensued in the late summer, and while harvest came earlier than normal on September 15th, the small amount of fruit on the vine showed plush and ripe flavors.

*Winemaking:*

Our Malbec from Blau Vineyard was destemmed into one open-top tank, and was cold-soaked for several days. Fermentation started spontaneously with wild yeast and the must was punched down manually twice per day for two weeks followed by pressing and racking into barrel. The wine aged for 16 months in French oak barrels, 50% of which were new, and was racked only once, immediately prior to bottling.

*Food Pairings:*

If it grows with it goes with: we love this wine with a traditional French cassoulet with duck confit or a skirt steak with Argentine chimichurri.